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# A D R A M A

IN FOUR ACTS

ENTITLED

# A U G U S T A

BY

J. VINTON WEBSTER

AUTHOR OF

AUGUSTA DANE

THE NAMELESS HERO

GROVER THE FIRST

THE HERMIT'S HOME

AND OTHER STORIES

SAN FRANCISCO :

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1903

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## CASIN OF AUGUSTA

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Judge Dane.....	Superior Judge
Winton .....	Husband of Augusta
Tom Smith.....	Friend of the Dame family
Elic .....	Son of Judge Dane
Hugh Berring..	Saloon-keeper and politician of Virginia City
Mark Twain.....	Writer and humorist
Lo Loreno.....	Indian murderer
Jerry Jessup.....	
Will Sidden.....	Friends from Kentucky
Judge Blake.....	Friend and counselor of the Jessups
Abram Curry.....	Penitentiary Superintendent, Carson City
Happy Jack.....	Stage Driver and friend of Berring
Major Wasson.....	Wit and friend of Mark Twain
Jack Pot.....	Gambler, Virginia City
Sing .....	Roustabout and dishwasher, Carson Prison
Pat Mooney.....	Carson Prison Steward
Doctor Duff.....	Prison Surgeon
Mrs. Dane.....	wife of Judge Dane
Augusta .....	daughter of Mrs. Dane
Helen Jessup.....	sister of Jerry and betrothed of Will Sidden
Mrs. Alcesta.....	a busybody
Mrs. Summerville.....	a cholera patient
Mrs. Sneider.....	friend of Berring
Lena .....	assistant cook, Carson Prison
Musicians, dancers, officers, prisoners, etc.	



# AUGUSTA

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## A D R A M A

### IN FOUR ACTS

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#### ACT I.

Scene 1, Town of Alameda. Old Wharf Road, Oakland  
in Distance.

*Enter Winton, excited.*

Help! help! for the love of heaven help!

*Enter Smith.*

What's the matter, man;  
That makes you split the air

With that shrill yell of yours?

*Winton*—Hello, Tom ; you come  
As fortune in the nick of time and as  
A friend and wisher for the best, I beg  
Your aid in rescue of my fancy rig  
And fair Augusta, ere the rising tide  
Does sweep them out to sea.

*Smith*—Where is the danger?

*Winton*—Yonder ; on the road

*Smith*—What strain or mishap caused the ill?

*Winton*—That dark-eyed maiden caused it all ;  
For months I've paid her court most lavishly  
But scarce impression made, and so to trim  
And decorate my love with glint and style  
I faced the random risk of losing my  
Equipage, bright and new from Hawley's,  
And that fine span of spanking bays, bred on  
The blue grass meadows of Kentucky ;  
All of which I fear are lost to me.

*Smith*—How came they in the flood?

*Winton*—Well, you see, I sped along the road  
That thwarts the eye of Oakland.  
Down to the wharf, with neck and neck of two  
And forty ; turning there with graceful curve  
That bulged the eyes of all the passengers.  
Received the sweet Augusta with a bow

And smile; then yanked myself beside her  
 Ribbons taut and bit cigar between  
 My teeth and head abaft, we sailed in state  
 Along the heaved up streak of spongy bog—  
 When suddenly the horses shied to left,  
 As startled by a ponderous gull, dead white,  
 Big throated, squalking as he went.  
 And thus alarmed, as if the Devil stood  
 Upon the track, the team swished sidewise down  
 Into the murky tide, just reaching flood.  
 At this my hair stood up like bristles on  
 A cornered hog, bayed by a pack of dogs.  
 My teeth did chatter as the rattle of  
 A saw in running through a hickory knot;  
 While ague fits possessed me like as do  
 The callow huntsmen shooting at a deer.  
 Augusta, seeing my unseemly plight,  
 Drew firmly from my hands the slackened rein.  
 At this I edged out in the flood knee deep  
 And started on the run for help—  
 Confound the luck! just see my pants—my boots  
 Are ruined with the slush. And all because  
 I dared to risk a danger for a woman.

*Smith*—Where is the girl?

*Winton*—Down in the running tide  
 Behold her holding fast those flound'ring steeds,  
 Like Andromeda doomed by Juno.

*Smith*—May the Devil take you for

An escort, ere another ride is yours  
 With beauty brave and highly bred—  
 But come, ceracious champion!  
 The peril thickens round that fair young form—  
 I'd wade a thousand tides, with all the mud.  
 Of forty fords for such a hand as hers.

*Exit Smith and Winton. Enter Mrs. Dane and Son.*

*Mrs. Dane*—I fear mishap  
 Hath befallen to Augusta.  
 The ferryboat hath been an hour gone  
 And she not yet in sight.  
 Go, my son, along the hoglash to  
 The wharf and see what ails the missing girl.

*Elic*—I guess she's ran away with Winton, mother,  
 For I seen the caud, with spanking team,  
 Tear by the house, just like a rattled loon  
 Full-fledged and making for the tide.

*Mrs. Dane*—Curb your jarring tongue, my son,  
 And leg it to the wharf in haste.

*Exit.*

*Enter Smith, Augusta and Winton.*

*Winton*—This is a happy rescue, Smith,  
 And grateful to you am I for it  
 With Augusta as endorser.  
 Her dress, just see, perhaps her feet are wet.  
 Surely she is nerve strung to the bone  
 And would a hero be with breeches on.

*Augusta*—The sorry plight my dress is in is of  
 No consequence, but rather is it pique  
 At this uncanny incident.  
 Surely, Mr. Smith, I owe you thanks  
 For timely aid in this affair, and shall  
 Be pleased to see you at my father's house.  
 The pretty words of Mr. Winton I  
 Will dry for kindling wood and lay up in  
 My memory, for future use when I  
 Can eke return of compliment.

*Exii Winton and Augusta.*

*Smith*—Well, that does beat a Hindoo farce  
 Unknown to blood and thunder;  
 Rather than unstring my joints  
 Like that poor chouse, and ape a baby  
 Wearing swaddling clothes, I'd surely ride  
 My shadow to its grave, and with contrition  
 Hari kari out my little soul  
 For Devil broth, or port it in the boat  
 Of silent Charon to the ugly jaws  
 Of triple-headed Cerberus.  
 The wonder is so many fools can live  
 Upon the earth without a grain of guidance  
 Bottomed on conceptions sane.  
 A loon that's lost its little wit could cut  
 The caper better, shaming all the breed  
 Of imbeciles that claim the counterpart of God.  
 His thrust at me that I have never been

In love, is like a breakfast hash, with more  
 Of hair and hide than wholesome meat.  
 Oh, yes; I've been in love, but since my suit  
 Was dubious from start to finish, I  
 Had sense enough to let the jewel go  
 When she refused to marry me, and then  
 My recompense is this: she's wedded to  
 My rival, who with fermentations of  
 A brewer's vat, is begging me to help him rid of her  
 By planning an elopement, promising  
 Full half his wealth to me, with latitude  
 A matchless match can make it so.  
 But then, I will not thus decree my fate  
 To one so fatal in her make-up.

*Exit.*

Act 1. Scene 2, Judge Dane's Parlor.

*Enter Winton.*

Winton—The home of my sweet charmer!  
 How I love the ground on which she treads!  
 Not for the virtue in the rotten earth  
 But for the impress of her footprints on it.  
 The opportune has come; my nerves must brace  
 Me for this chase, and from the sunny fields  
 And verdant meadows of my hopes must house  
 The fragrant hay, ere frost or chilling rain  
 May intervene to injure it.

*Enter Augusta.*

*Winton*—My dear Augusta, may I beg of you  
Indulgence for a word, most urgently  
Demanding audience?

*Augusta*—If this gem of thought does worry you  
So much in seeking utterance, perhaps  
It is as well to give deliverance and let  
The darling die or live as best it can.

*Winton*—Pray, my dear withhold your rasping saws  
And sentimental scrapers, ere I have  
Divulged the purport of my speech.

*Augusta*—Then make an end of all this labored breath  
And clothe the thing in raiment more befitting.

*Winton*—Then I will say I am in love with you,  
Augusta, all the way from toes to tip  
Of flowers in your hair—stay! no offense  
I hope, and though return for it may be  
With you as light as an abas in pearls  
Uncut, I will with care convey it to  
A lapidary skillful in his art,  
And beg of him to give it lustre such  
As shall outshine the morning star.

*Augusta*—If you can form a star out of a hope  
So frail, its manufacture set about;  
But do not edge upon enchanted ground

That's full of blowholes surely dangerous.  
 So kedge your woo and wind the cable up  
 That gives it undue latitude.  
 A lark that sings to win a linnet from  
 Its parent nest is doubtful victory.

*Winton*—But if the lark can give the linnet  
 Better house and sweeter nest, why should  
 The linnet rail against the change?

*Augusta*—Gilded halls and divans rich  
 No mortgage hold on happiness, and oft  
 The thatch-roofed tenement contains more cheer  
 And rondeau lines than domiciles of ease  
 Where luxury does wear its gilded toggery  
 And surfeits on its idleness.  
 Life hath duties stern, and he  
 Who feeleth not the yoke that urges him  
 To carry something of his brother's load  
 Is drawing to the day of retribution,  
 Which God imposes through contrition in  
 Another world.

*Winton*—And so the split-hoofed idler  
 With rasping word, who takes no heed of ills  
 That others bear, is but as rubbish of  
 The world and worthy only of the gibes  
 The footpad warbles from his throat.

*Augusta*—The gist of my contention is  
 That toil in avenues that help us all



To human betterment, hath anchor hold  
 In God's ordaining, while the idler  
 In poverty or rolling wealth, who hath  
 No higher aim in life than selfish ends,  
 Does cumber standing ground, ungainly strutting  
 And unsung to his distempered grave.

*Winton*—By all the virgins blest,  
 You seem a stranger to your single self,  
 With frosty words that chatter all my teeth;  
 Your parents wish this union, why delay  
 The word that will complete my happiness?

*Augusta*—The reason why I love you not;  
 To wed a man I do not love would breed  
 A rancor in my heart, to fester in  
 Your strong embrace and chill my life  
 As does a granite wall the myrtle  
 Growing north of it.

*Winton*—O fie on such a badden thought;  
 I wish your answer, yes or no,  
 Just say the word and then I'll go.

*Augusta*—Then go. The berries on this bush of love  
 Are green and puckered, sour to the taste,  
 To pluck them now would give the colic sure,  
 Beyond the cure of sage or catnip tea.

*Exit Winton. Enter Mrs. Dane.*

*Mrs. Dane*—How now, Augusta?  
 Mr. Winton's left the house huffed to

The brows, with face as red as snapper on  
A gobbler's snoop.

*Enter Judge Dane.*

*Judge Dane*—How's this, good brotonoid?  
The night's a berring passes on beyond  
Its dark equator, you seem in truth  
To be unmindful that the morning star  
Is climbing up the Orient, and like  
A wandering seraph smiles upon the world.  
What keeps your inner chamber empty of  
A lovely form?

*Mrs. Dane*—Compliments aside  
Though sweet Acarner shines not brighter than  
Your wits, my business here is knowledge why  
Our protege left the house a moment since  
With flaming face and mien that augured not  
His soon return.

*Judge Dane*—Speak, Augusta, ere fair Venus rings  
The sable curtain up that ushers in  
Another day, and bids the sun unfold  
The glory of his coming.

*Augusta*--I have, my father, not a word to say  
That's worth your time in hearing it.  
Nothing surely have I said to give  
Offense to any man of sense; a cub  
Or skittish kitten; simply have I told  
The cole, that if I knew my heart it had  
So far been used but as a pump of life,

And manufacture cheer and sympathy  
 For those of kin.  
 That Cupid's darts were stranger to my blood  
 Save when, with pranks, he flitted by my face  
 As Morpheus held me in his embrace,  
 And that his suit was like the bridle for  
 A colt that never had been bitted for  
 A ride, and that my mind was firmly set  
 On duty here at home and search for lore  
 To broaden out my brains.

*Judge Dane*—You speak in riddles, girl,  
 Like one who has unsteady lodgment on  
 A hade, with dress of hackel words, obscure  
 And dim of sense.  
 You'll stay at home on duty bent, is it?  
 Well, then, what is the duty of a child  
 In midway teens but to obey and do  
 As bid by sire and gentle alma?  
 We must presume to judge in this affair,  
 Which much concerns us all, and you  
 Should cut in twain this caprice  
 Coddled in the mind about those evanescent  
 Dreams of love that lives in thatch-roof  
 Cots, or begs in squalor on the streets.  
 Lay off this stale romance of former age,  
 When sonnet did charm a foolish peasantry,  
 And knighthood, dressed in breechclouts,

Rode on fiery steeds into the thickest  
Fight, that valor might a buxom  
Beauty win, bedecked in skins about  
The waist, with breast and shinbones  
Brown and bare and shoeless feet  
All sprawling at the toes.

This is an age of sterner stuff, and he  
Who sows the wind must reap where  
Nothing grows, unless it's gleanings of  
Another's field.

Utility is shrouding for the grave  
All sentiment, and those who hold  
The pursestrings of the world own all  
Things else. Virtue offers tribute there  
And manhood, once so common in this  
Land, holds out its pleading hand for  
Dole of work or stinted substance.

The flood-tide in each life is when  
The current runs his way, and he who  
Lingers by the flowing stream in haggle  
For the start, has lost his opportunity.  
Much more's the fear for womanhood.

She must accommodate the time in which  
She lives. She is a plaything in the hands  
Of ruthless fate, without discretion in  
Affairs of childish love, when chance does offer  
Opportunity to marry well.

What will you do in this affair?

Speak plainly, here and now,

*Augusta*—My noble father, surely would  
I not in aught offend against your will,  
Obedient in all things my aim in life  
Has ever been to serve my home and those  
In duty bound I am to serve,  
Withhold not then, I do implore,  
A daughter's right to choose, or not  
To choose, as seemeth best to her in  
All affairs relating to the heart.  
Your counsel, always wise, I will admit,  
But this concern of yours concerns me  
Most, and all mistakes of act are at  
My cost.

*Judge Dane*—Fie on you, girl!  
Abjure this fake of yours! Know  
Thou, success in every line of life  
Succeeds by dint of wit, dovetailed about  
With policy, deep seated in the mind.  
Fortune, fickle ever, seemeth most  
Secure when sitting at the feet of him  
Who favors most his own.  
The talisman that leads to gilded halls  
Is cunning brains distilled in selfishness,  
Wherein all softer sentiment eats up  
Its self, as does an eel in hunger  
Gulp its tail.

*Augusta*—Presume I not to say that judgment  
Is profound in thee, my father;

But then how can I see so high above  
My head?

How can a glowworm wear a lion's mane?  
Or lily bloom above the tallest pines?  
God fixed the measure of each thing's  
Estate to fill its mission in its given  
Sphere. So each should not reproach  
The other for its moods, environed as it is  
For good or ill, and naught can  
Make it otherwise.

I am a woman, have a woman's ways;  
Though frail she is and given to conceits  
Her life is love, and she who loves the  
Most in all things pure and sweet does  
Live in truth the nearest God's design.  
So it seems to me that no one has  
The right to sear her heart with ulcers  
Bred by stopping up its portals in a  
Match that soul and sense abhor.

*Judge Dane*—Ah! well do I observe  
That you can summarize as well as spin.  
Perhaps I am unduly anxious in this  
Smudge for gain and will not press  
The matter further in this morning  
Measure of the night. So take more council  
With yourself. Educate your wits to view  
Unbiased stern utility, that holds humanity  
In the hollow of its hand, and be not

Stiff and willful to a selfish end that  
 May embarrass all my future plans.  
 Good night and may the morning bring  
 You better council.

*Exit all.*

Act 1, Scene 2. A Street Scene.

*Enter Winton and Smith (Winton prancing about).*

*Smith*—Where get you all this supple  
 Marrow man, that does outdo the  
 Shindigs of a crazy loon?

*Winton* Verily it may be so.  
 Hardly snug can I contain myself.  
 The hills are green with hope again,  
 And light breaks on my soul like some  
 Bright summer day injected at  
 The winter solstice.

*Smith*—How so?

*Winton*—Did you ever see the corn in bloom  
 At Christmas, or the crocus bell break through  
 The drifting snows before the vernal  
 Equinox began to think of spring?  
 Thus seems it now with me. Ambrosia  
 Grows apace; the linden buds, the lilies bloom,  
 And stern old Boreas bears the ugly night  
 Of death into the frozen world, and hangs

The horror splintered on the northern pole.

*Smith*—Lord save the mark!

In pity hold this chant to smug  
Your temper on a rainy day, and give  
Me pith of what you're shying at.

*Winton*—What am I shying at  
Say, good friend, I'll wager my roan horse  
Against two little pigeon toes that you  
Have never been in love in all your life,  
Unless it was with leaks and onions,  
Peppered with your spicy temper.  
Well, then, to brief it for your sake,  
Will say, Augusta, queen of manly hearts—  
No fairer in the land—I've looped with my  
Existence as a mate to run the race  
Of life for stakes my father holds.  
Fortune is a shining charmer in  
A fickle world, and he who catches her  
Should be content with self and all things else,  
For surely he has seized the forelock of  
His opportunity!  
Yea, Gods in ecstasy, all working on  
The remnants of the world could not produce  
Another such as she!  
Her words fall like the harmony  
Of some old song—remembered since  
The world was young.



Pray, Smith, go hug yourself till breath  
Comes back to me again.

*Smith*—With what uncommon skill of magic did  
You use to baffle common sense and beat  
The necromancer in a race for love,  
Without a leg to run upon?

*Winton*—How did I win her?  
Ask these whispering oaks,  
They know the story all by heart.  
For once they were as young as we and were  
In love with sentiment, so here have stood  
With open ears for centuries and heard  
The simple swain and maiden stories, long  
Forgotten, save by them and moving ticks  
That sing their requiem forever here.  
But to be a little more precise  
I'll give a hint of how the thing is did,  
So you, perhaps, may profit by the line  
When Cupid finds you in a melting mood.  
'Tis this. If you would ever surely win  
A maiden, woo her mother first and as  
You go blaze well the way to minds and hearts  
Utilitarian by show in hand  
Of substance rich or which comes by quick  
Inheritance, for money in this world  
Does take more tricks in gambling of this kind  
Than cooing with the tender plant of love.

These elder people once had sentiment,  
 Perhaps in Cupid's hands entrusted,  
 But lengthy steep in life's realities  
 Doth brave the strength the little god contains  
 And sets the heart on something more secure.  
 My father's rich! That is the shining tail  
 That wags all worldly dogs and surely finds  
 A woman primping much to catch the cade  
 For pith of every daughter's dower.  
 And so another moon with all its change  
 And fickleness, will hardly shine and wane  
 Again before I call her legally  
 My own, when like the droning bee that sips  
 The dreamy sweets of rose or poppy bloom,  
 I'll while away the fleeting hours.

*Exit.*

*Enter Augusta.*

*Augusta.*—Well,  
 It seems I'm to be a victim to  
 That monster bred in Hades, having aims  
 No higher than the dross and glum of cold utility.  
 O sweet heaven! couldst thou straighten out  
 The crooks and warps that puny pride and greed  
 Have seared with shame and wrinkled on the world's  
 Affairs, and let simplicity and love  
 Of right prevail again, God's work  
 In man's uplifting would be manifest.

The life environed that a woman leads  
 Does often turn to gall the impulse of  
 Her bleeding heart and makes a mockery  
 Of marriage worse than bonds of precedent  
 That in some tribes yet bear her trembling form  
 To breathe its last, and, black with suffocation,  
 Moulder in the rotten earth beside  
 A tyrant dead.  
 Perhaps it may be for the best, who knows?  
 So frail are we in judgment that the sage  
 Is often short in demonstration of  
 A single truth. So we tramp the path  
 Of all the millions passed without a guide  
 To point the way that each should surely go,  
 Poor, puny man! And yet is full of pride!  
 Ah, well! there seems no other route for me  
 Than that my austere father has prescribed.  
 May scanty hope and time but ease the pain  
 Of this great sacrifice, for hope is all  
 There is of daylight in this world of mental gloom  
 That shadows all the landscape of my life;  
 Surely there is recompense for duty  
 Well performed, else heaven is a myth  
 And virtue but a passing dream.  
 The benefit of doubt in this affair  
 I'll give my counselor and yield to him  
 My callow judgment, but whatever else  
 May fail me in this tribulation

Truth and duty, ever foremost in  
 The best resolves, shall be the pole star of  
 My destiny, as follows forth the trusting  
 Mariner the bearings of his steadfast  
 Compass, however rough the surging seas  
 With troubled waters.

Act I, Scene 4. Room in Judge Dane's House.

*Enter Winton and Augusta.*

*Winton*—Like some silurian of  
 The under world with light and shadow mixed,  
 The earth, with oscillating dips and turns,  
 Has doubled round the sun two several times  
 Since first we knew the bliss of wedded life.  
 So far so good,  
 But then the world is not quite all a dream.  
 The rasping sear of dull, cold facts intrude  
 Continually their ugly faces,  
 And mix the sweet and wormwood so together  
 That life does hold the scale of good and ill  
 About in even balance.  
 But be this as it may,  
 With shay and spavined horses we  
 Have rolled the dusty road that seems to link  
 Like umbil cord our father homes, until  
 The stay is doubtful welcome to us both.  
 So I must turn another leaf in life's  
 Erratic volume, ere it be too late

To keep the company of self-respect;  
 And since my sire seems a little curt  
 And indisposed to lax the taut upon  
 His pursestrings aiding in my betterment  
 I see no other way along this rough  
 And flinty track than taking up the cinch  
 And riding stride myself.  
 And since there seems no other route to better  
 This predicament, I have resolved  
 To take a tramp across the cloud-bound snows  
 That hedge us from that wonderland where all  
 The hills are ribbed with shining ore and laked  
 About with slumps of puddled silver.

*Augusta*—Emergencies make men, sometimes  
 Of timber not selected from the best,  
 So I concur in your resolve.

*Enter Judge Dane and wife.*

*Judge Dane*—Indulge us for this rash intrusion  
 For I hear you do propose a journey  
 To the wilds of Old Nevada, where  
 Now centers much of worldly thought and hope  
 Of gain beyond the shadow of a want.

*Winton*—True, indeed, I go,  
 As one oppressed with weight of care for one  
 So surely mine.  
 The wolf is in the fold of my estate  
 With teeth all set to chew the ragged end

Of nothing which is dowery from my sire.

*Mrs. Dane*—Your wealthy father might  
Afford your land and stock and shelter for  
A time, until by dint of care you could  
Secure a competence.

*Winton*—Sweet mother of my ablative,  
In all thy learning didst thou ever hear  
Of the accipitrine, in science called  
A chuck, a species of the marmot tribe,  
And brought from Persia centuries since?  
If not advised, please read up on this score  
And you will comprehend the make-up of  
The average man when he hath wealth  
Beyond the normal lust of common need.

*Mrs. Dane*—And of Augusta, what becomes of her?

*Winton*—As with a lovely plant,  
Full blown in some rare garden of the gods,  
Untimely rooted up and robbed of all  
Its fresher sweets, the chief concern shall be  
For knack of my ability to make  
Provision for her coming.  
And in abeyance do I wish  
To place your tender care about this gem  
Of aromatic growth unused to storm  
Or biting frost.

*Mrs. Dane*—Be it so. She is my blood  
And what I have is hers, for mother is

The counterpart in name for love of those  
She gave to life.

*Judge Dane*—Then speed you onward,  
Hope we always good will come of it.

*Winton*—So, so. It's settled now. Good-bye to all,  
And may I live forever green in your  
Sweet memory, my dear Augusta. [Kisses her.]

*Exit all.*

(Song.)

I cannot love, for once I loved  
A laddie in the mountains.  
He lived where all the hills were groved  
And waters flowed from fountains.  
And on and on the streamlets ran  
To join the brimming river—  
Forever! O Forever!  
And on and on the streamlets ran  
To join the brimming river.

I told him that I loved him so  
I never could another,  
And wheresoever he should go  
I wished to be his—mother.  
And on and on the streamlets ran  
To join the brimming river—  
Forever! O Forever!  
And on and on the streamlets ran  
To join the brimming river.

He seemed the picture of despair  
 And sought to soothe him lonely,  
 When shook his head with saddest air  
 And said he loved one only.  
 And on and on the streamlets ran  
 To join the brimming river—  
     Forever! O Forever!  
 And on and on the streamlets ran  
 To join the brimming river.

So mourned he for one love long lost  
 - And I for one consuming,  
 And thus came chill and bitter frost  
 When lilac buds were blooming.  
 And on and on the streamlets ran  
 To join the brimming river—  
     Forever! O Forever!  
 And on and on the streamlets ran  
 To join the brimming river.

Act 1, Scene 5. Hotel Office, Sacramento.

*Enter Augusta.*

*Augusta* (to the Clerk)—Can you tell me  
 Something of the route and company  
 I will have in transit to Virginia City?

*Clerk*—The grades are steep,  
 But not severe in rut and rock;



With curves and windings 'mid the hills and peaks  
 And depths of God's great ababyrinths of pine  
 And cedars planted there before the flood,  
 Which speak of might and call to worship high  
 Above the steepled church each passenger  
 Who loveth nature in its majesty.  
 As to your company, I cannot tell  
 Except this gentleman who goes to-day—  
 Mr. Berring, this is Mrs. Winton,  
 On her way to Virginia City  
 To meet her husband, who's residing there.  
 A stranger to the route, she seeks to know  
 Its difficulties and the company  
 That stages it this morning.

*Berring*—Glad I am to meet you, Mrs. Winton,  
 Your husband is a friend of mine,  
 The journey is not difficult and on  
 The way there are so many grand surprises  
 Topped with God's magnificence that in  
 Their view old Time forgets the counting of  
 His lagging hours.  
 Your company it does appear will be  
 Indifferent. The iron-nerved  
 And skillful driver, Charlie, holds the reins,  
 So, the score is safe in that direction.  
 I will be a passenger and beg  
 The privilege to serve your smallest need.

*Augusta*—I think my needs will be a cipher, since

Provision ample's fully made and all  
My baggage checked.

*Exit Augusta.*

*Berring* (to Clerk)—By jingo! she's a gem  
All cut with setting golden. Not a flaw  
Or break in all her make-up. Seemingly  
A little cold and formal surely, but  
I'll bet a keg of sparkling rye that ere  
We reach Virginia City she will tame  
A bit in her austerity.

*Clerk*—Be cautious, Fredy.  
That man of hers may lay you out  
In winding-sheets before you are aware  
Of it, and of your stock in trade consume  
The contents of a brandy barrel in  
Preserving what is left of you.

*Berring*—I know the chappie well,  
And have no fear of shot or shell  
In his employ. Vanity does rock  
Him in her cradle with a lullaby,  
In which he dozes dreamily as does  
A pig that's full of milk.

Act 1, Scene 6. Cape Horn, Sierra Mountains.

*Enter Two Robbers.*

*First Robber*—Well, pal; how long

Have you followed the trade of road Agent?

*Second Robber*—Seven years.

*First Robber*—What induced this calling?

*Second Robber*—The Devil.

*First Robber*—How so?

*Second Robber*—By hedging me about  
With conditions damaging.

*First Robber*—Fie on you man! Your  
Trumpery answers nothing—wherein lies  
The pith of your speech?

*Second Robber*—Well, my father did to his  
Advantage kick the scuttle early. Mother  
Was devoted, with a sister loving, who  
Rustled for me, while the days passed as  
So many dreams without a care for those  
Who toiled that I might have repose.  
Unhappily my mother died and sister  
Spliced another man. Then sat I on the  
Hollow of a log and whittled sticks  
In cogitation of my lost supports.  
And how to live a gentleman without  
The grime of toil. My kin and friends  
Did stake me for a time but soon they  
Gave me shoulder colder than a clam.  
Then hired out as clerk in Randolph's  
Country store for board and clothes.

This drudgery and lack of means did grind  
 Me to the quick and soured all my  
 Better self.

The pressing need of money caused me  
 Cinch the till, with hope that cunning  
 Would avail against dishonesty.

But Nemesis followed me so closely  
 That suspicion camped along my track,  
 And finally pounced down upon my  
 Robberies.

At this I skipped like antler hounded  
 To the hills and took a cue as agent  
 On the road. And you?

*First Robber*—Oh, my pedigree is  
 Brief, and full of kinks.

I had no father and my mother  
 Housed with chumps, whose only virtue  
 Was in waiting opportunity to steal.

Thus environed, is there wonder that  
 I graduated early, starting out

As fortune hunter with a burglar's kit?  
 But why bemoan a lurid destiny?

We are as debris on a flooded stream  
 That moves forever, witht the current  
 Leading, swinging round the eddies as we go  
 To Erebus, or led by a thread to Lacheris—

But hold! The stage grinds round  
 The Cape and opportunity is pricking

Up his ears, so hide we and await  
The issue. [Secrete themselves.]

Act 1, Scene 7. Mountain Pass. Enter stage with passengers. Two robbers appearing by the roadside.

*First Robber*—Hold your horses,  
Stranger, and throw us out the box  
Of boodle!

*Stage Driver*—'Tis light to-night  
And will not pay your plunder.

*Robber*—No mincing words but pungle,  
Or I'll bore you full of holes.

*Stage Driver*—All right, put up your  
Gun. More holes would make me less  
A man and may be measure me a box.  
Here is the wallet. Gorge all you can  
And take the consequences.

*Second Robber* (peering in the stage)—  
Who's in the dugout?

*Berring*—A lady and myself.

*Robber*—Then condescende to alight myself,  
And lady ditto.

*Berring*—You wouldn't harm a  
Lady, surely?

*Robber*—Mum, bind your chops, you

Skipjack, or else I'll go through  
 You with dose of brimstone and metallic  
 Salts, so get out double quick.  
 And you, miss, madam, follow suit!

*Augusta*—For what reason shall I  
 Leave the stage? If robbery is your  
 Purpose, here's my purse and all  
 I have of value.

*Robber*—The purpose is my own and  
 Best it is that you obey my order!

(Augusta alights. Robber peers in her face.)  
 By Garry! she's a duck of the first  
 Water! Fit to be companion of an  
 Agent most accomplished in his art,  
 From railroad president up to those  
 Who live more leisurely among the hills.  
 A kiss I crave just now, and more  
 Substantials afterwards. (Takes hold of Augusta.)

*Berring*—Hold, damn villain! How dare  
 You touch a hair of hers!

(They fight and Berring swings the robber over a yawning precipice. In the melee the horses run away, throwing Augusta to the ground. First robber and Berring empty their pistols at each other over the prostrate form of Augusta, then clinch and a desperate struggle ensues. Finally Berring swings the robber over the precipice, barely saving himself by clinging to a sapling on the brink.)

*Berring*—By the holy cross  
 That is business worthy of a Titan!  
 The robbers and the stage are gone,  
 Mrs. Winton, swooning-blank with fear,  
 And I a wounded cripple.  
 How can I aid her? I'll try a sprinkle  
 Of this snow upon her upturned face,  
 Perhaps it may rescuscitate.

*Augusta* (sitting up)—Where am I?

*Berring*—On top the Sierras, alone with  
 Me, after a tug with the robbers.

*Augusta*—Oh, yes; I do remember something  
 Of it now; but then it seems the  
 Shadow of a dream more than reality.  
 Where is the stage?

*Berring*—The horses frightened at  
 The belching guns, with willing driver,  
 Treked it down the grade at breakneck speed.  
 Where they now are I know not.

*Augusta*—Where are the robbers?

*Berring*—Gone down that bluff to  
 And dine to-morrow with the devil.

*Augusta*—What caused the fight?

*Berring*—Perhaps you will remember that  
 The burly fellow harshly bid you leave  
 The stage, and while, with chiseled features,  
 Leaning on the muddy wheel, he peered

With lustful eyes into your marble face,  
 And, seizing hold about the waist, did seek  
 Pollution of your lips, with snoup and breath  
 That garlic could in measure sweeten.  
 While using coarser words of action  
 Baser afterward.

I could no longer stand this gibe of hell,  
 With his effrontery.

My mother was a woman, pure and good,  
 And since her love and ministration  
 Settled like a hallow on my heart,  
 I dare all things where virtue is at stake,  
 And therefore bid a bold defiance to  
 The chit.

My clutch about the gullet forced  
 His breath into a whistling calliope.  
 This loosed his hold on you, and, struggling for  
 The brink of that yawning precipice,  
 Fortune favored me and started down  
 To Pluto with the robber.

The first disposed, the second came,  
 With blazing gun, and saddled for a ride  
 To death or victory. Our pistols met  
 And belched their shot and sulphur smoke  
 Across your prostrate form.

Then empty iron battered on our heads  
 Like tattoos on a kettle drum.

The clinch—it came at last!

And each did struggle manfully to save



His ugly fortune, balanced in the scale,  
 So evenly that hope stood still as when  
 An earthquake plows its passage through the earth  
 With ridging waves beneath the helpless feet.  
 At every turn we nearer margined on  
 The brink of that destructive fall;  
 'Then came the tug that told for time  
 And for eternity.  
 By movement quick and dextrous, I sent  
 Him whirling to his vicious comrade down  
 A thousand feet below, and by a skint  
 Of chance was left behind him short of breath  
 And coatless, hanging to that tree.

*Augusta*—Are you hurt?

*Berring*—Oh, well. I think not seriously.  
 My shoulder's cut across, and gun shot  
 In my arm.

*Augusta*—Where?

*Berring*—(pulling off the residue of his coat and exhibiting a bloody shirt sleeve)—Just here.

*Augusta*—The blood flows freely, and with  
 This flounce I'll bind it up securely.  
 (Tears flounce off of her dress.)

*Stage Driver* (in the distance)—Hello, there, Mr. Berring! Are you dead entirely?

*Berring*—No, no; not quite,

Charlie. Where is the stage?

*Stage Driver*—Around the curve, full half a mile.

*Berring*—Round your team, and back it quickly.

*Stage Driver*—Never a bit! The road is so narrow that a frog with a long tail could not make the turn.

*Berring*—I fear the lady cannot walk so far.

*Mrs. Winton*—Yes, I feel quite strong.  
That snow bath did its work completely.

*Exit all.*

Act 2, Scene 1. Virginia City.

*Enter Berring and Mark Twain.*

*Mark Twain*—Hello, Fritz.

How do you curb the undammed current of  
Your love since making that great conquest on  
The mountain top?

*Berring*—The conquest you suggest  
Is all within the hollow of your strained  
Imagination, long diseased.  
By breeding myths and spooky hoboes.

*Mark Twain*—Oh, Albion, great Son of Neptune!  
Do forbear to smear your skillet sauce  
On spongy bread that's buttered twice.  
It was conveyed to me by simple word  
And paper squib that you in brave defense

Of womanhood had given quietus to  
Two robbers, and had won a lovely one,  
Unwooded before by manly action.

*Berring*—Most certainly.

There was a woman in the case ;  
A jewel surely rare upon the earth,  
But husbanded by another man, and I  
A simple worshiper, and, vain of hope  
As driving Ethan through the clouds,  
She thanked me condescendingly for all  
'The service rendered. Nothing more of this  
There is, I can assure you.

*Mark Twain*—How is your hurt?

*Berring*—Improving rapidly.

*Mark Twain*—What kind of rag  
Is that you have around it?

*Berring*—It is a tuck  
From that fair woman's gown.  
Discovering my predicament,  
She ripped it at a jerk and bound it on  
My arm to swage the running blood.

*Mark Twain*—I'll give you half an ounce of gold for it.

*Berring*—Wherefor?

*Mark Twain*—Oh, I simply wish it as  
A souvenir to show my friends how much  
There is in human nature to admire

And measure up the breadth of gallantry  
Of man for woman wronged, without the hope  
Or lingering wish for recompense.

*Berring*—Hold, man! Go take a Hammam bath,  
And wash this jaundice from your scurvy blood  
That blurs the wits and makes a little shad  
Of common sense.

This rag to you is nothing, while to me  
It's much, and all your wealth could not secure  
A shred of it.

*Mark Twain*—Dispel your jealousy, my boy.  
I see I've struck a tender spot in your  
Anatomy; but let me give you just  
A little poser. Didst thou ever see  
A pair of breeches full of love and fury?  
Set off dynamite with fuse and shell,  
Or ford a river flowing into hell?  
If so, and dread such consequence  
Then give a married woman room to spread  
Herself as does a trapper wing his net;  
But never be a thing so foolish as  
The chippering quail, to seek the dismal fork  
Of such calamity.  
The green-eyed monster, warmed and hatched  
By ugly fantasies, would range the depths  
Of pandemonium to reach his cuckler,  
The earth does reek with blood of victims  
Slaughtered on the vile and crooked paths

Of libertines, while heaven's justice  
Seemingly approves their taking off.

*Berring*—Whence turned you thus a moralist,  
And bulge Pandora's box of ills for all  
Who dare to court a lovely woman not  
His own; and if he can cut loose a bond  
Of hers that makes a marriage but  
A mockery of love!  
Be done with this array of virtue which  
Is stranger to your blood and ill becomes  
Your father's scald-headed progeny.  
I have no ill design, nor would I harm  
The smallest hair of fair Augusta's head;  
But since the noble soul of Cataline  
Was taken far beyond the vaulted  
Ether chambers in the universe  
O! God that separates the burning stars,  
No form or face, in my esteem, does whet  
To life again the deep regard in which  
I hold her, as this gem revealed to me  
Most strangely opportune.  
I know and watch my ropes as does  
A sailor on a doubtful sea where tides  
Nor winds make not a swell upon the deep,  
Unseen nor heeded not by him.  
Besides, my antecedents are as good  
As hers; for there does run within my veins  
The blue blood of a line of kings,

Caped with tone, unsullied down to date.  
 So, Clemens, lose no sleep on my account.  
 A coon of my proportions never sticks  
 His head into a trap set as a snare  
 To catch a cotton tail.

*Mark Twain*—Oh, blame your titled  
 Imbeciles and sceptered monarchies.  
 The page of history does reckon with them,  
 Remembered mostly for their tyrant strut  
 And bitterness of soul.  
 The kings of men are those who dare the right,  
 And damn a wrong or poltroon anywhere.

*Exit Clemens.*

*Enter Winton.*

*Winton*—Glad to meet you, Berring.  
 I came to thank you for the favor done  
 My wife, and bring from her congratulations.  
 Your wound is healing rapidly, it seems ;  
 And with the poultice off the scar will be  
 A souvenir to show your friends in years  
 To come, while eloquently rehearsing  
 The story of your prowess.  
 But, with all your service, came I for  
 Another favor that much concerns  
 My future welfare.

*Berring*—Name the service I can render you.

*Winton*—'The place not being yet filled,

I seek the Governor's appointment to  
 The office of County Clerk.  
 And, fully comprehending value of  
 Support of yours, I ask it as a friend.

*Berring*—Though hedged about with applications for  
 The place, you hold my preference.  
 And, having now the Governor's ear, I think  
 I can secure you that appointment.  
 But before I promise sure I wish  
 A word with you about a matter  
 Vital to your future.

*Winton*—Proceed. I am all ears to hear  
 Your candid counsel.

*Berring*—'Tis well. Your wife is handsome,  
 The fairest in the town, and even now  
 Has full a score of men half rattled when  
 They bow or chance a word with her, yet  
 You keep the treasure, unsuspecting, in  
 This crowded hostelry.  
 You tramp about the streets in search of work,  
 And do allow her doubtful company,  
 Instead of taking pains to go with her  
 Yourself, which half discretion would suggest.

*Winton*—Her breed is good,  
 And virtue steadfast as a star. Why then  
 Suspect the sun of sheer inconstancy,  
 Because its golden light doth gild and warm

The blackened world?

*Berring*—I do concede the beauty of  
The parallel, but in the bottom runs  
Of human nature conscience has no place,  
And even higher in the scale of life  
The animal does sway its destiny.  
When sense of soul and common honesty  
Forsake it in pursuit of ghoulish lust  
And strife for gain abnormal.

The spirit may be willing, but all flesh  
Is weak, and it is not uncommon that  
The drifted snow grows murky under heat  
And dust; the lily taints in company  
With fungus growth and deadly upas.  
So he who loves a woman or a garden  
Pure and sweet must love the welcome care  
And labor that will keep them so.

The fool who leaves his fairest jewels where  
The common herd can see and finger them,  
Excites a disposition to purloin.

Candidly, I like your wife, and from  
My knowledge of the sordid make-up of  
The world, I know the danger she is in  
And warn you now in time.

Get yourself a home and mind  
You nurture it with circumspection  
Mingled in with love and gentleness,  
Which will, if persevered, bring down the stars



Or take you up to them.

*Winton*—Your words are wisdom of  
The better sort and heed I will with thanks  
Your timely warnings.

*Exit all.*

Act 2, Scene 2. A Ballroom, Gold Hill.

Enter Pat O'Riley, singing.

The zephyr plays among the hills,  
The swain his girl caresses;  
And dallies, while old time he kills,  
In playing with her tresses.

The stakes are set up on every grade  
And claims hold down the dollars,  
While women on the streets parade  
To catch defenseless fellows.

Then up with hats! the winter's past,  
The springtime brings the clover;  
While every man has hope at last  
And every lass her lover.  
Chalinchalay chalinctum dell,

We're on the brimming river,  
That floats all souls to ill or well,  
And this goes on forever,  
And this goes on forever. [Dances.]

The big four ride the Comstock lode,  
 And claim they have a billion;  
 While splitting stocks with silver goad  
 To satisfy the million.

They buck the tiger of the band,  
 With Flood tide swimming fences,  
 While Johnny digs and whispers loud  
 And Jamey takes their senses.

Then up with hats! the winter's past,  
 The springtime brings the clover;  
 While every man hath hope at last,  
 And every lass her lover.

Chalinctum lay, chalinctum dell,  
 We're on the brimming river,  
 That floats all souls to ill or well,  
 And this goes on forever,  
 And this goes on forever.

[Dances off the stage.]

Enter Bandmaster, music and dancers of every grade  
 and dress.

*Bandmaster*—Take your partners for a quadrille.  
 (Music.) First four right and left.  
 Second four.  
 Ladies change.  
 Gents.

Enter Lo Loreno (intoxicated, approaching Mrs. Winton on the floor.)

*Loreno*—Bueno, senorita; heap nice.  
Give me a kiss. (Takes hold of Augusta.)

*Jerry Jessup* (partner of Mrs. Winton)  
Scoundrel! how dare you insult a lady?  
(Knocks Loreno down. A general melee; several shots fired; ladies scream; leave the room in confusion.)

*Exit all.*

Act 2, Scene 3. A Gaming House..

*Enter Jerry Jessup* (intoxicated.)

*Jessup*—My purse is low and spirit  
Bad, and so for change I'll try  
My luck in bucking at this monte bank.  
Here's an eagle, 'tis the last I have,  
And so I'll drop it on this ace of  
Hearts.

*Enter Will Sidden.*

*Sidden*—Hold there, Jerry;  
You are seas over, so you'll bet  
No more to-night. Come home with me.

*Gambler*—Sir, what right have you  
To break my game with this impertinence?

*Sidden*—I beg a pardon, but this is

My friend, and as you see, he's sheeted  
 In the wind without a tiller wheel.  
 Come pike, let's worry homeward.  
 (Pulls Jessup from the room.)

*Enter Lo Lorenzo. (Aside.)*

Dis pike's de lumbrá hit me at  
 De ball (exhibiting a big knife),  
 I kill him for it now in dis black night.

*Erit.*

Act 2, Scene 4. A Dark Street.

*Enter Sidden and Jessup* (Jessup drunk, Sidden pulling him.)

*Sidden*--Come along, Jerry, the night  
 Dreary and the wind is high.

*Jessup*--Oh, you-you too-too da-dam  
 S-smart, Sidden. A fel-low ca-can't  
 Ha-have a good ta-time withou-out  
 You po-poking you-you no-nose int-to  
 Someb-body else b-business.

*Sidden*--Come, come, Jerry, what would  
 Your mother and sister think if they  
 Should behold you thus?

*Enter Lo Loreno* (slipping along in the darkness stabs Jessup in the back and disappears.)

*Jessup* (falling to the ground)—O God!  
I'm stabbed to death!

*Sidden*--Where?

*Jessup*—In the back. Draw the knife  
Before I die.

*Sidden* (drawing out the knife, cries)—Help!  
Help! murder! murder.

*Enter Policeman.*

*Policeman*—What's the matter here?

*Sidden*—My friend has been stabbed  
To death by some villain slipping  
Up behind

*Policeman*—What are you doing  
With that bloody knife?

*Sidden*—Why, I just pulled it  
Out of my friend's back.

*Policeman*—A pretty story, surely.  
I have caught you in the very act  
Of murder. Come with me.

*Sidden*—Caught me in the act of murder.  
How?

*Policeman*—You still retain the bloody knife  
With clothes bespattered with the  
Gore.

*Sidden*—The charge is false as hell!  
He is my friend, whom I was leading  
Home, half drunk, from Tupper's gambling  
Hall.

*Policeman*—Your story is too thin for surface  
Diggings in these parts, so come to jail..

*Exit.*

Act 2, Scene 8. Kentucky Home of the Jessups. Mrs.  
Jessup, an invalid.

*Enter Helen Jessup.*

*Helen*—Dear mother, after months  
Of waiting I have a letter here  
Received to-day from those we love,  
Who dwell in that far region of the  
West where daylight glows her final  
Ending, when the curtain of the night  
Is stretched midway the ocean.

*Mrs. Jessup*—Read the letter, my daughter,  
This suspense oppresses me.

(Helen breaks the seal and glances over its contents,  
much agitated.)

*Mrs. Jessup*—Helen, I bid you read  
The letter to me without delay.

*Helen*—I can not, mother; it would  
Kill you.

*Mrs. Jessup*—Give me the letter immediately.

(Helen hands the letter to her mother and bows her head in her parent's lap.)

*Mrs. Jessup* (reads, screams)—O God! it is All over with me now! (Dies taken off the stage.)

*Enter Squire Blake.*

*Squire Blake*—Well, Miss Helen,  
I come to offer condolence regarding  
The loss of your noble mother, and  
I understand you have another trouble  
Outlined in a letter recently received  
From friends in the far West, which  
Seems to have been the chief cause of  
Your parent's untimely taking off.  
Will you give me some detail of this  
Unhappy affair?

*Helen*—Here is the letter that killed  
My mother, and the incentive that  
Impels me to visit Nevada.

(Squire Blake reads.)

Virginia City, Aug. 26, 1861.

My Dear Helen:  
Since I last wrote  
You a great calamity has overtaken us.  
Two years ago the 29th of April last  
Your Brother Jerry was fatally stabbed  
On a public street of this city, he

Falling from my arms and dying almost  
Immediately, without speaking more than a word.  
I got nothing save a glimpse of  
The murderer, as he approached us from  
Behind, stabbing Jerry in the back,  
Then disappearing like a shadow in  
The blackness of the dreary night.  
Thoughtlessly I withdrew the long dirk  
From the wound and yelled murder.  
At this several citizens ran to our  
Relief, and with them a policeman  
Who observing me with the bloody  
Knife in hand, charged me with the  
Crime, and conveyed me to the lockup,  
Where I have been detained ever  
Since.

In a trial before the United States District  
Court I have been found guilty as  
Charged, and sentenced for a term  
Of three years at hard labor in the  
Territorial prison, near Carson City,  
Which is nearly ready for occupancy.  
I am sure this recital will be a blow  
Terrible to yourself and mother.  
I have delayed writing for months,  
Hoping a favorable turn in my case,  
But the burden of proof seems to be  
Against me, and everybody is so busy  
With his own affairs that a jury would



Agree to hang a saint rather than  
 Be detained twenty-four hours.  
 So, in justice to you, however trying  
 The ordeal, I feel duty bound to give  
 You the facts.

I hope your verdict will be reserved  
 Until you learn more of this matter.  
 If I cannot prove my innocence ; if  
 I am to go through life with the verdict  
 Of your brother's blood on my hands,  
 Death can be my only consolation in  
 This world.

My only hope is that a time will come  
 When this foul murder will out,  
 And the suspicion resting upon my  
 name may be removed.

May your Christian fortitude sustain  
 You in this trying hour.  
 God bless you and farewell.

Your wretched but devoted, William Sidden.

*Squire Blake*—This is a fearful recital, Miss Helen,  
 And should stagger your determination  
 In the hazardous journey proposed.

*Helen*—It is the cowardly only who  
 Stagger when plain duty calls, and  
 Makes excuses for a will unnerved.

*Squire Blake*—Do you believe William  
 Sidden guilty of this crime?

*Helen*—Do you believe that God reigns  
And the Redeemer lives?

*Squire Blake*—Certainly I do.

*Helen*—Do you believe there is  
Any honor or virtue in the world?

*Squire Blake*—How you talk, my child!  
Your blazing questions burn down in  
To my heart, and brace my better nature  
To declare ther does exist the sweetest  
Virtue and the fairest honor.

*Helen*—Ah, well. And so do I  
Believe in this divinity  
And offer up devotion daily,  
For proof of God's infinity is found  
Complete in the complexity of flesh  
And mind and soul commingled in a way  
That makes the dust we tread upon to breathe  
And walk and think.  
Thus baffling the cogitations of  
The skeptic, setting all philosophy  
At naught, and placing sober science in  
The nursery of thought. like children  
Swaddled and diverted by  
The tinkling of their rattles.  
And yet my faith in this unriddled  
Manifest is but as dross compared  
To that I have in William Sidden's  
Innocence.

*Squire Blake*—But the burden of proof  
Seems against him.

*Helen*—So it seemed against Christ in  
The trumped up charges that he had violated  
Roman law, and suffered pangs of death  
Between two malefactors.  
Did the world lose faith in Him for that?  
No, no; it was the culmination of a love  
The like of which was never known before  
Or since, and come what may for good  
Or ill, my faith in God and he who is  
Betrothed to me shall never budge an inch  
In my devotion.

*Squire Blake* (aside)—By my mother's grave  
I'd rather have such love as that  
In camp or hollow tree, than lace of gold  
And fine prunella in a castle rich  
And rare in every luxury.  
Then go, my girl; I'll caw no more at your  
Strong bent, for all there is of beauty in  
The world that's worth the name will follow you.  
May heaven bless this high resolve and break  
Sweet daylight in each path you may be called  
To tread.

Act 2, Scene 5. Home of the Wintons.

*Enter Winton and his little girl.*

*Winton*—Where did papa's baby get  
So much candy.

*Baby*—Miser Berring dave it to me.

*Winton*—How often does he come here  
When papa's gone?

*Baby*—Oh, I dasn't no. Sometimes, and  
Brings me tandy.

*Winton*—So, so!

*Enter Augusta.*

*Winton*—Augusta, for what purpose  
Is Mr. Berring allowed to visit you  
From day to day, and always in my absence?

*Augusta*—Seldom does he come and then  
Not of my choosing.

*Winton*—Why then comes he at all?

*Augusta*—Because you have insisted that  
I give him no offense. Shall I forbid  
The house to him?

*Winton*—If you can manage it in way  
That wards supicion off my wish.

*Augusta*—What do you mean by that?

*Winton*—Well, you know I am much  
 Stuffed with obigations to the man  
 F'or favors shown politically and otherwise.  
 So to offend would be my funeral  
 Heap of martyred indiscretion.

*Augusta*—Then you want him gone without  
 Suspicion that you did demand his  
 Going.

*Winton*—That's it, exactly, dear Augusta.  
 Not a downright dose of peppered words,  
 But in that way a woman knows the best  
 How to relieve herself of an unwelcome  
 Visitor.

*Augusta*—Very well; your word is  
 Law to me in this affair.

*Exit.*

Act 2, Scene 6. A Street in Virginia City.

*Enter Winton and Mrs. Alcesta.*

*Mrs. Alcesta*—Good evening, Mr.  
*Winton*. How's your wife to-day?

*Winton*—She was well this morning  
 When I left home.

*Mrs. Alcesta*—Somebody else seems  
 More attentive to Augusta than yourself.

*Winton*—To whom do you refer?

*Mrs. Alcesta*—Well, I don't wish  
To make trouble between man and wife,  
But you observe I live here where I  
Can't help seeing everybody going to  
Your house, and it seems my duty as  
A virtuous woman to reveal what I  
Have seen since you moved up on  
The hill. That is, if you would like  
To hear it?

*Winton*—Go on with your story.

*Mrs. Alcesta*—Of course you know  
Mr. Berring is a constant visitor at the  
House in your absence?

*Winton*—A constant visitor! What do  
You mean, woman?

*Mrs. Alcesta*—Well, perhaps I ought  
Not to say that, but he is there quite  
Often.

*Winton*—How long does he stay?

*Mrs. Alcesta*—Well, I should say from  
Half to an hour and a half, and the  
Curtains are usually drawn down  
When he comes.

Oh, it is really awful to think of  
A married woman letting another  
Man in the house while her husband  
Is absent.

I should not dare do such a thing  
 Unless it happened to be some particular  
 Friend or intimate acquaintance,  
 For you know temptation is continually set  
 In the way to take advantage of our little weaknesses.  
 Your wife, I may say, is proud and handsome,  
 Will not notice me upon the street and  
 Seems indifferent to those who may behold  
 Her callers, as if in blind contempt of  
 Other people's tongues.  
 And as a friend, with much  
 Experience in the world, I would  
 Advise you come up from  
 Business unexpected; look out a bit  
 For lady love, stray letters, doubtful  
 In propriety, or some fine day  
 Your duckv may be missing.

Act 2, Scene 7. Winton's Parlor.

*Enter Winton and Augusta.*

*Winton*—Well, my lady, I have  
 You at last in the hollow of my  
 Hand.  
 Here's a letter from your lover  
 Which I fortunately intercepted at the  
 Post this afternoon.  
 It tells the story of your faithlessness

To me and attachment for a villain  
Wearing the garb of a friend.

*Augusta*—I do not understand you.  
Mr. Winton, please explain yourself!

*Winton*—You don't hev! Then read  
This letter and tell me what it means.

*Augusta* (reading)—

San Francisco, Oct. 10, 1861.

My Dear Mrs. Winton:  
I herewith send  
The baby some trinkets and youself  
A diamond ring, which I trust  
You will accept and wear as a  
Small token of my esteem.  
I shall remain in the city some  
Weeks and hope to meet you during  
Your stay in Alameda.

Devotedly yours,

Fritz B——

*Winton*—That's a duck without feathers,  
Ain't it? Devotedly yours. Surely  
He is. A lark with a wanton's wing  
Roosting on my threshold.  
Hell and blazes! Where's thy virtue,  
Woman? This thing smells to heaven  
And all pandemonium is leering at  
A cuckold fool.  
I shall preserve this darling evidence



In action for a quick divorce which I  
Propose to institute immediately.

*Augusta*—I can assure you, Mr. Winton,  
That I have never given Mr. Berring  
Encouragement to write such.  
If he has been so foolish indiscreetly  
To pen such flattering compliments to a  
Married woman, certainly I should not  
Be held responsible in this affair.

*Winton*—Oh, no; certainly not.  
But how about expecting to meet  
You soon in Alameda?

*Augusta*—Mr. Berring learned of my  
Proposed visit to Alameda, here in  
Your presence one evening, when the  
Fact was inadvertently mentioned—  
There is nothing more in this affair  
I can assure you.

*Winton*—Woman, take me not for some  
Ungainly ass, that brays aloud and wags  
His skinny tail; then dopes his greedy maw  
With mouldy fodder.  
I know a kit  
Of stinking fish by smelling it.  
And for a man, that's sane, to breakfast on  
A dowdy shad and call it clean.  
Forgets the honor of his mother,

Sleeping like a lewd in dirty sheets  
 Not of his soiling  
 I am content to let the devil take  
 His own and fry the fat of hypocrites  
 Who fawn and whine of virtue wronged,  
 Then set up shop where virtue never goes.  
 So, henceforth, as streams converging at  
 Their source, diverging as they onward move  
 To rivers never joined ;  
 Let us drink of Lethean waters  
 That remembrance may blot the page  
 Of its unhappy record.

*Augusta*—Ah ! Well !

If thou durst will it thus, 't's surely done ;  
 But then this hemlock trippled bittered by  
 The pique and gargot of your angry words  
 Is draught of hell's own cheerless choosing,  
 Staggering the valid witness of  
 Your antecedents  
 In honest, upright souls, this sleeping child  
 Should lend degree of sympathy between  
 The figure and gargol of your angry words  
 The pair that give it life, and soften down  
 Asperities, that grow like arbor gourds  
 In jealous minds.  
 There are stabs of dangerous import  
 That time may heal, but when a heart is pierced  
 The life it did sustain must fail

And wither like a flower frosted for  
The grave.

I was a child in years when you did plead  
My hand, with mind unskilled in many things,  
And doubtful where my highest duty lay.  
But finally when faith and love stood pledged  
To you, the sun when flaming all the Orient  
No surer turns the morning glory in  
Its greeting, than your coming did my face  
To thee.

Your will has stood before me like a light  
That one does follow trustingly.  
At times, perhaps,  
When kindness was a little strained with you,  
I may have seemed with saddened face as does  
A star behind a fleeting cloud ;  
But then the star had never budged an inch  
In its ascension.  
Shall all this faith and constancy fall by  
The way like chilled and withered leaves?

*Winton*—Too late this pleading comes,  
This home is like a house built on the sand  
Without foundation worthy of the name ;  
Go where you will, the silver cord is loosened  
And the golden bowl is broken.

*Exit Winton.*

*Augusta*—Can it be that this is not a dream?  
Does destiny work woe like this?

If Jealousy can wear his garb of green,  
 And blast a home where dwelleth purity,  
 Where can the true heart find degree of rest?  
 An outcast am I, grimy on the brink  
 Of desolation for an awful crime  
 That never was committed.  
 My child! She sleeps!  
 God bless her little soul, and when I'm gone  
 May heaven grant that innocence shall feel  
 No pang for action not its own.  
 Farewell, dear one, my ruined life seeks peace  
 Where all the sorrows of the world do  
 Find a resting place.

*Exit.*

Act 2, Scene 8. A Street in Virginia City.

*Enter Happy Jack* (singing).

*Happy Jack*—

O, Nancy Jinks, I'm mighty glad  
 You are so sweet a critter;  
 She's got a beau for every toe,  
 And not a soul can get her.  
 Green grow the rushes, O!

*Enter Winton* (running up against H. J.).

*Winton*—What the devil are you doing here?

*Happy Jack*—And what the devil are you

Doing here—running over a fellow like  
A bison bull left behind his herd?

*Winton*—Looking for a woman lost !

*Happy Jack*—Who lost her?

*Winton*—I did, by mishap of my tongue and temper.

*Happy Jack*—Then may you find her not,  
If she is strayed on that account.  
For any woman scorned by rankling words  
And low down epithets, will kick the shins  
Of him who undertakes to rub the oil  
Of harmony into her marrow bones.  
Again, and blight will set like toadstools damp  
And cold, where once the roses grew.

*Winton*—Oh, hang your moral gush  
To dry in Haides! Have you seen the one  
I seek?  
Square-footed give me what you know, or go.

*Happy Jack*—Well, briefly stated, I  
Did see a form, like some lost soul in white,  
With something kin to raven's wing for hood.  
It flitted up toward the crown of sun peak,  
When with airy feet the summit pressed,  
It seemed to give an invocation thus :  
Then passed beyond, just as the morning light  
Streamed from the sun as came its burning car  
From margin of the underworld.

*Winton*—Where were you at the time?

*Happy Jack*—Just rounding Devil's neck,  
With stage and six in hand.

*Winton*—Saw you else of this affair?

*Happy Jack*—A moment later I observed  
A grooking, crawling thing, in shape of man  
High on the mountain side, unsteady in  
Its gait, creeping this way, then in that,  
Then straight ahead, as if in search  
Of something lost.  
Mayhap pursuing stealthily the form  
In robes before outlined.

*Exit* (singing).

Green grow the rushes, O!  
The sweetest hour I ever spent  
Was with the fair young lassies, O!

*Winton*—That fellow has surely seen  
The bird I'm after, but that other form  
What the Devil was it?  
I'll get assistance for a search.  
Hello, Colonel Wasson. (Banging on a door.)

*Wasson* (above)—Who's down there banging at the door?

*Winton*—Dress, and come down, Colonel.  
I am in trouble.

*Wasson* (opening the door)—Winton, you here,  
In the half-opened eye of the morning,

Looking like a ghost, with Charon boating  
On the river Styx, with freight of souls  
For Cerberus.

*Winton*—My wife has run away.

*Wasson*—Which way did she run?

*Winton*—An apparition like a spirit lost  
Has just been seen upon the summit of  
Mount Davidson, and, clambering up  
Its side a crouching form as if of  
Bloodhound breed, seemingly pursuing it.

*Wasson*—Why did she trek it thus  
Between two days?

*Winton*—Oh, well, you see, I went  
Home cross. The green-eyed monster  
Prompting me, I gave in words not gentle  
Vent to foul suspicion of a liaison  
With Primrose Berring, when she took  
Offence, and talked me back as any  
Woman will at seeming slight.  
At this my temper ruffled up like  
The setting quills of some old porcupine,  
And in my rage did bid her go to——  
Where the woodbine twineth.  
At this she swooned away, when  
I did take my leave unceremoniously,  
And walked the town for full three hours.  
Then, like a cur returning to its kennel,  
After killing sheep, I sneaked the streets

Most cautiously, and, reaching home,  
 Just as the morning cock set up  
 A clamor that the old oblivion of  
 The night had fled.  
 And fled also had fair Augusta.

*Wasson*—Ye gods,  
 What asses mortals are to stick  
 Their noses in a pinch and whine because  
 It hurts.  
 How infinitely wise and good was God  
 To give the devil fire in which to fry  
 The fat of fools!  
 Like Tantalus, they strive in vain for that  
 Beyond their reach, and in the strife lose what  
 They have; then wail because they have it not.  
 If all the evil hap'nings in the world,  
 That never happened anywhere, save in  
 The gloomy garrets of disordered minds,  
 Could pass unheeded by,  
 Full half the ills of life would disappear,  
 As mist before the rising sun.  
 Oh heaven help to make us over in  
 A world less obdurate and splinted up  
 With charity that can detect a glint  
 Of beauty where there's much of it.

*Enter Mark Twain.*

*Mark T.*—Well, I am surprised to see  
 Two worthies pillowed on a public street



At an hour so untimely.

What's in the wind to warrant this array?

*Wasson*—Winton's lost his wife,  
And wants to garnishee the stars to aid  
In her recovery.

*Mark T.*—I know her not! Presume you that  
The treking game is worth the burning of  
This early candle.

*Wasson*—The fairest Piute squaw  
On all these barren hills seems but  
As baboon, buckskin-breeched, to angelized  
Augusta, whom we seek.

*Mark T.*—If angelized, why wish her back  
To this abode of dirt and devil broth?  
I never knew but one such creature in  
This place, where Clytemnestra seems to rule  
Supreme.

*Wasson*—What angel mean you, Mark?

*Mark T.*—The printer Myran, who,  
With Dan de Quille for pen and inkhorn can  
With ease, a coal pit galvanize, or swing  
A toad and make a seraph of it.  
Which way has Winton's dulcy flown?

*Wasson*—It seems she's taken to  
The mountains, like a fawn pursued.  
Come on. We'll scale the breast of this  
Old mother of the peeping hills.

*Exit all.*

Act 2, Scene 8. A Grotto at Base of Mountains.

*Enter Lorenzo* (carrying a white form).

*Lorenzo*—Ah, senora; you is me one at

*Las.* A hard old tug, yet here

We is. Just under bluff where yo

Was kill yo self. Come in me

Casa, where me lif.

(Puts her in, gets in and rolls stone in doorway.)

*Enter Wasson, Mark Twain and Winton.*

*Wasson*—Well, here we are at base

Of Davidson, whereon we've rambled hours

Searching for a treasure lost.

Here seems the last of that old moccasin

Traced to apex, then meandering down

Again from brink of this high precipice,

Where last we saw the slipper's imprint.

The villain must be hereabouts with prize

Secreted. Come and let us search for them.

Here seems a cavern at the base of this

Old bluff, walled in with streaks of shining quartz

And gray-gowned adamant. (Rolling away stone.)

Hello, you denizens of darkness!

Who's in there?

(A voice within.) An hombre miras

Lo que pacies. Go way or I kill you.

*Wasson*—Well, Winton, I think we

Have located your wife, yet there  
 Seems to be a brief obstruction to  
 Her rescue. Will you go down in the den  
 And make examination of the premises?

*Winton*—What, and get loaded up  
 With lead for my surprising pains?  
 Let the devil take her for a messmate  
 Rather than make a mess of flesh and  
 Bitter sauce for me to breakfast on.

*Wasson*—So Mark, it seems the game is up  
 Unless you volunteer recovery of the prize.  
 This adventure will immortalize  
 You more than all the pens and inkhorns used  
 In twenty years.

*Mark Twain*—I beg of you, dear Colonel, not  
 To rob yourself of such an honor,  
 My ambition runs in other lines.  
 With quill in hand and Dan Dequill for help  
 We can with ease set up the whole of this  
 Great territory, stretching every ear  
 To greatest length of braying asses  
 Utmost, when they hear of this wonder  
 Double headlined in the *Enterprise*,  
 Thus soaring like the new-born sun,  
 Or sailing on the wings of night  
 To reach an eminence of black or white  
 That will adorn a simple tale.  
 But when it comes to guns and saber cuts

My bones shake in my boots and all my hair  
 Does bristle like the troubled porcupine.  
 No, no, dear Wasson, I could never think  
 Of robbing you of honor in a field  
 Of action common to your trade.  
 And if you dare the villain in that den  
 And bring the woman out alive,  
 The *Enterprise* shall flare and flame as does  
 A signal fire on a mighty hill.  
 And in the foreground shall appear your name,  
 Nighed high upon the glowing arch of fame.

Wasson—Oh, good Lord, what stuff!  
 Shut off your screaming calliope  
 And give us all a rest.  
 Is that you down there, Lorenzo?

Lorenzo—You go, dis my casa!  
 Come no here—'hombre die.

Wasson—We want the woman, bring her out.

Lorenzo—You can no haf her, she go jump  
 Kill herself, I catch an of her so  
 She mine.

Wasson—Her husband's here with me  
 And we'll blow off your head unless  
 You give her up.

Lorenzo—No, no; he no kill a rat.  
 He too mucha one big coward.

Wasson—Will you let us talk with Mrs. Winton?

*Loreno*—No, no. You no see her, she no talk.  
You vamoose or I shoot you!

*Wasson* (falling and rolling down into the cavern;  
several shots are fired; Loreno severely wounded, when  
Mrs. Winton is brought out of the grotto)—  
Here, now, I have the lady safe, so let  
Us travel to the town.

*Winton* (addressing his wife)—It seems  
You've had a fearful tramp and bad  
Experience with a cunning scamp.  
Will you go home with me, Augusta?

*Augusta*—No, I never can. It is no  
Longer home for me. There never can  
Be rest beneath its roof. The wildest wood  
Is as a paradise to such a place.  
For surely is the name of home  
A jarring mockery where cold reproach  
Burns like a bitter frost the tender plant  
Of sympathy.  
The desert loses all its horrors to  
The wandering Arab, housed in canvas walls  
With those he loves, as share and share alike  
They take of good and ill.  
While in fair castles on embowered isles  
Of genial warmth, with winds in which the late-  
Shorn lambs delight to skip contentedly,  
Are often barren of the bliss of peace  
Where loving hearts strike home in unison.

The make-up of this checkered life is so  
 Uncertain, that the tear-stained dirge  
 Of happiness often crowds on fleeting heels  
 Of hymen's merry march.

Sad-hearted memories of the past  
 Have grown a wilderness between us  
 Sunless as the halls of Eserhadden.  
 Destiny hath drawn his iron fingers  
 Through my heart so deep and cruelly,  
 That lacerated as it is I seek  
 No consolation but to be alone  
 With my own misery.  
 Give me clothes, my child and means to reach  
 My father's home, and you shall never  
 Wrinkle up your brow at me again!

*Winton*—'Tis well, perhaps, that you have so decreed,  
 Whatever else, in this we are agreed,  
 And so make ready for the final start,  
 There's ill between us and no faith in heart.

*Exit all but Winton.*

*Winton*—So, so. She's gone and I am left alone.  
 Distempered through with vain conceits, I yet  
 Have sense enough to know my folly in  
 This tumble turn of pride and ruined hopes.  
 The chances seem that she is wrong accused  
 And I to blame for that accusing.  
 Coupled with the ills resulting,  
 The gaw and selfishness of many lives

Show not their color skimming summer seas,  
 But in the warp of murky weather flare  
 Their wanton flags.

Much is the pity, but the truth should out  
 Though galling like a truss in sultry heat!

What fantasies we weave of airy nothings  
 And augur ills that never come to pass.

The soundest thought in all philosophy  
 Is to hold the scales in even balance—

“Duty with the soul of charity,”

The gabble of the world that nimbly takes  
 Its seasoning from so many enmities,  
 Does break more rotten ground in hell than all  
 The other woes not in the train of this  
 Great monster.

A tender plant will wither at the touch  
 Of frost, as does the gentle germ of love  
 In keeping of a taunting fool.

The greatest sorrow of each soul, perhaps,  
 Is nurtured in the hollow wish to live

Its troubled life again, that mistakes made  
 And wrongs imposed might be effaced

From act and memory, in better moods  
 Made possible by sad experience.

The consciousness of action ill-advised  
 And selfishness that sorrow other lives

Do weight the load that every mortal bears.  
 Perhaps there is a respite, so decreed

In this, that death is one eternal void,  
 In which the blank of memory allows  
 Forgetfulness to sleep in peace.  
 I hope it may be so,  
 For conscience is a heavy load to lug  
 While conscious wrong is ever manifest.  
 If there be hell beyond the confines of  
 This life, for torment of the lost and damned,  
 The goad of burning brimstone cannot add  
 To agony of deep remorse which gnaws  
 The soul that's pinioned down forever with  
 The skeleton of its own dishonor.

*Exit.*

Act 2, Scene 9. A Street in Virginia City.

*Enter Happy Jack* (singing.)

The earth spreads out her ample lap  
 To nurture fairest roses,  
 While nature sets without a gap  
 The hills and dales with posies.

The trees are warming in the sun  
 Their leaflets and their fingers,  
 And May day has the garb of one  
 Who blushes while she lingers.

God has planted beauty here  
 Wherever grows the bower,



And each should love the living year,  
 With all its sun and shower.

Hie ding ding, the cat and the king,  
 The cow jumped over the moon, sir;  
 The little doggy burnt his tail,  
 And you'll get whipped to-morrow.

Life is sunlight to the soul  
 That seeks another's pleasure,  
 And with the good there is no dole  
 In spreading heaven's treasure.

If all could see the living light  
 That flames in God's great arches,  
 Soon would disappear the night  
 And sweet would be their marches.

We strive for things we cannot use,  
 To sate a miser's wooing;  
 And nobleness of heart abuse—  
 The best of life undoing.

Unmindful man of passing years,  
 Unheedful of the ages;  
 The record angel blots with tears  
 As turns old Time the pages.

So cycles pass with man in state,  
 To one great common dooming;  
 While nations dwell, that once were great,  
 In one great common tombing.

And all because the gleaner grows  
 Not what in truth he's reaping,  
 As pitiless the toiler sows  
 In want, with children weeping. (Chorus.)

*Enter Berring.*

*Berring*—Hold up your warble, Jack,  
 I have a job for you.

*Happy Jack*—Well, pay me in advance  
 An' I'll be aisy with the crather.

*Berring*—No, not a red cent until  
 The service is completed.

*Happy Jack*—What is the service worth to me?

*Berring*—If well performed, more than a year's  
 staging.

*Happy Jack*—Pray unwind the thread of this  
 Adventure.

*Berring*—Well, you know that Winton's wife  
 Hath peppered with the fool and skipped  
 The town with dudgeon in her blazing eye  
 And pent-up sorrow in her heart.

*Happy Jack*—Well?

*Berring*—Well, in confidence I will  
 Admit I am in love with her and wish  
 To follow, as hunter does a nimble deer.

*Happy Jack*—Yes, yes; and so I thought.  
 But such occurrences are common, sir—

Most common in this town, where scarce  
 A shift can cross a public street,  
 Or flutter in the wind, that does not  
 Have at least a score of  
 Oggers on her track, with breath of  
 Onions, panting for the chase.

*Berring*—Fie on you, man ;  
 Why moralize, when rich reward  
 Stands tiptoe for a service small indeed?

*Happy Jack*—Because my mother was a woman,  
 Doubled with a sister pure as snow,  
 With love so blind and dominating in  
 Her nature that she fell an easy prey  
 To blandishments of one less carmel  
 Your single self.

*Berring*—Waylay your jaws !  
 This surprising impudence doth clog  
 The avenue of common decency  
 And ribald heaven with a jibing tongue.

*Happy Jack*—Console yourself, a better day will come.

*Berring*—When?

*Happy Jack*—When enough of ghouls most ravenous  
 Inlaid with prying libertines,  
 Shall pass the gates of purgatory,  
 To make a holiday in hell.

*Berring*—Be satisfied, thou saucy scoffer,  
 This proposal for espionage hath not

The color of a lax or dark intent.  
 But since the woman leaves the burly burg,  
 Without escort or friendly hand to help  
 In need, what sin is there in shielding her  
 From harm, and even keep a watch to meet  
 Emergencies?

*Happy Jack*—Oh, well ; proceed.  
 I see it is the same old story of  
 A Jack black in a lover's garb that does  
 Protest a friendship that is friendless when  
 Unclouded lust can dictate terms.

*Berring*—Bandy no more words. I simply wish  
 To know if you will take the job?

*Happy Jack*—How much in nuggets is it worth to me?

*Berring*—A hundred ounces of the brightest gold  
 The Comstock lode affords.

*Happy Jack*—Well, many saints  
 Have fallen baud for less amount,  
 And since I am no saint or moralist  
 Beyond the measure of a common need,  
 That hinges on respectability,  
 I grant your case and take the burthen up,  
 Conditioned that I shall not carry this  
 Espionage to degree that blurs the sense  
 Of common decency.

*Berring*—'Tis well. I mean no harm.  
 Would not a hair of hers unloosen from

Its braid, nor turn a trump that is not in  
The shuffled deck.

*Hanny Jack*—Then give your charge and I  
Shall bend submissive to its mandate.

*Berring*—'Tis this—  
With circumspection travel to the coast,  
And when you reach the Occidental  
City wharf with shanties built about  
The tide and scrambling up the grade and out  
Among the hills, that fix their foothold in  
The mother sea, turn, and looking eastward,  
Where you will behold a winding  
Silver horn that creeps along between  
The sylvan woods, as yet but little known  
To canoe or her sister argosies,  
Within a slip upon the city's front  
A paddle steamer, called the Clinton, sits  
And breathes upon the changing tide.  
Board this vessel, she will shortly cross  
The sapphire stretch of placid bay  
And enter in the shining horn.  
When its meanderings margin on a league  
There will appear to right a narrow wharf  
That sways on shaky underpinning.  
Landing here, tramp down the heaved up  
Highway half a mile, with ample rush  
And salt grass green on either hand.  
Then bearing eastward through the margin of

The oak for several rods, you will observe  
A gothic, gabled home, vine-clad and banked  
About with battle roses.

This is Augusta's childhood home,  
Where she will surely be before you reach  
The place. Seek service there.

The master dignified you'll find, with stretch  
Of strut that lifts and lowers all his form  
At every step.

He hath perceptions like a sharp-billed hawk  
That broods above a chicken yard.

Be wary of him, keep your wits in play,  
And lose no trick that sleight of hand can hold.

Stint no job of work assigned  
And make your service indispensable.

Cuddle with the cook, anticipate  
Her every wish and praise the sops she gives  
You for a dinner.

Compliments are cheap, but dallied in  
A woman's ear will yield more juicy fruit  
Than softer words or more pretentious speech.

Make your ear a grand receiver  
For wireless telegraphy,  
But never anxious seem in any way  
To learn the inmost of her little soul.

Be, in fact, her confident, for she  
Is jewel of the household when you wish  
To dig about to find its harbored secrets.

Thus ensconced, you can with ease  
Find out each move Augusta makes  
And send, clandestinely, the gist of all  
Your finding out.

*Exit Berring.*

*Happy Jack*—What fools we mortals are  
To pester out our lives about the wives  
Of other men and coax a gunshot in  
The ribs before we get a nip or sprig  
Of smilax from her lips.  
But then it's all the same to me. I was  
Not born to rule the milky way.  
And so I'll do as bid and get my pay,  
And leave Fritz Berring in a shay  
That line the road to deviltry.

*Exit (singing.)*

Sally Dooley ran away  
To catch an ancient lover,  
Her breath was like the new-mown hay  
Or blossoms on the clover.

Act 3, Scene 1. Room in the Hotel, Carson City.

*Enter Helen Jessup.*

*Helen*—And this hotel is near the prison  
In which my lover lingers in confinement  
For a crime not his!  
No! He is so gently tender in

His nature that a bug could face him in  
 A towpath with security, and singing,  
 Praise its maker for a footfall that  
 Has never harmed a living thing.  
 A woman may be weak, indeed, but then  
 It is her purity in tears that makes  
 A fortress, where all manly honor stands  
 Like adamant in her defense.  
 It seems Divinity hat willed it, that  
 On all occasions where affliction claims  
 Support, the burly captain in his straps,  
 And strutting lord of high degree, wrapped  
 In rattling armor, pale with quaking fear  
 Where woman dares to go for those she loves.  
 I have no hope but in my troth to him.  
 So here I am to stay, come good or ill,  
 And if I fail the rescue, here my bones  
 Shall bleach, and if my spirit is allowed  
 The latitude, its wail shall start the hair  
 To bristles on the head of every one  
 That did abet this foul injustice.

*Enter Clerk.*

*Clerk*—Miss Jessup, this is Mrs.  
 Winton from Virginia City, seeking  
 Lodgings for the night, and not  
 A bed to spare save extra one this  
 Room affords, so beg consent that she  
 And child may lodge with you.



*Helen Jessup*—Most willingly, with due  
Appreciation for this compliment.

*Exit Clerk.*

Unhood, good lady, doff your heavy cloak,  
You must be weary with the journey.  
And now, my little dear, let me undo  
Your wraps. How sweet and beautiful you are,  
A mother's treasure and a father's joy.  
Memory indulges me that I  
Have heard your name before.  
Can this be Augusta Winton of  
Virginia City?

*Augusta*—The same, and this, I think,  
Must be Miss Jessup, sister of brave  
Jerry and betrothed of William Sidden?

*Helen*—It is, but how your words  
Do take my breath. A stranger and a friend  
Revealed most opportune.  
Will Sidden wrote me how  
A greaser named Loreno sought to kiss  
You at a ball while dancing with my brother,  
Who in his wrath did floor the saucy  
Fellow for his impudence.

*Augusta*—Yes, 'tis even so, and ever since  
I've taken interest in your brother's case,  
And like some horror a suspicion haunts  
Me that the blow he struck Loreno for

Insult he offered had no little part  
In that untimely taking off.

*Helen*—Then have you doubt who killed my brother?  
Was it William Sidden?

*Augusta*—Believe that Sidden killed brave Jerry?  
Wherefore should I? Surely there is much  
Of evil in the world, but where or when  
Was mortal in his senses ever known  
To kill his friend without a cause?  
'Tis true, it hath been done in drunken brawl,  
But Sidden never touched the scorpion  
That stings to death its boosy confidant  
And ruins half the race and waters half  
The world with tears.

*Helen*—Sweet heaven, bend this way  
Thy glowing stars as stepping-stones to reach  
Nirvana's chambers of the blest, where now  
My mother's spirit beckons me.  
Forever will I love and bless your life,  
Augusta, for these noble words that melt  
A night of sorrow into sunbeams.  
I knew it all before, as does a trusting  
Mariner, cast off by heavy seas;  
In boat with broken ribs and tattered sail—  
There is to leaward peaceful anchorage  
If but the straining ship can hold her sides  
Together through the blinding storm.

*Augusta*—I can conceive the joy you feel  
To hear of this assurity, but why  
So far from home and friends?

*Helen*—The promptings of my heart  
For William Sidden's life and liberty.  
Did call me to this place and here I am  
'To stay, and die if need be in the fight

*Augusta*—Have you seen him since  
Arriving here?

*Helen*—Yes, to-day  
I managed entrance in the prison,  
Saw him working in his stripes and had  
A talk of home, of loved ones there  
And of my faith, as steady as a star,  
Without its aberration.  
At this the dreary sadness of his face  
Went out as does a mist that thwarts the sun.  
Perhaps you've seen the like, I never did  
Before, save when my father died.  
The fell destroyer gnawing all  
His vitals out, ran through his fevered blood  
Like fiery serpents in a race with life.  
But when,  
On reaching portal of another world,  
He said, in words scarce audible, "My child,  
Who sings? I hear a strain unearthly in  
Its sweetness and I feel constrained to go.  
Come bear me company." Then pressing

Tenderly my hand, the wrinkled  
 Sorrows left his face, and even I,  
 Though mortal as I am, did get a glimpse  
 Of paradise.

At this full-faith avowal Sidden took  
 Me in his arms, with aspen tremble,  
 Implanting kisses on my cheek like one  
 With burthened heart who finds a jewel  
 Counted lost.

The burly guard, not liking this display,  
 Did snatch at me and sought a like embrace.  
 God seems to have ordained it thus  
 That manly men can not be cowed by fear,  
 So in a flash Will's face grew rigid as  
 An iron shield and then his Spartan fist  
 Went smash into that brutal chop.  
 The slump, prone on his back, did yell  
 For help, when others came to his relief,  
 And in unmanly ways dragged Will to door  
 Of a new dungeon, half finished at the top,  
 Where in the damp, cold place my love was thrust,  
 Chained as a beast to flagstone in the floor  
 To live on bread and water for a week.

*Augusta*—And will you try to see his face again?

*Helen*—Try? I'm here to stay!

And all the chains and ropes the town affords  
 Cannot enthrall me strong enough to lag  
 My will to try;

But, dear Augusta, pardon this harangue  
 It's run at loose ends long enough to make  
 You think me something of a dawdle—  
 Tell me of yourself and future hope

*Augusta*—My past seems black with disappointment  
 And all my future like a star gone down.

*Helen*—Your husband and your home,  
 Is there no comfort in the thought?

*Augusta*—I have no husband, neither home,  
 And all the comfort left me is this child  
 And nursing my own misery.

*Helen*—How so?

*Augusta*—The green and yellow jaundice of  
 A jealous mind hath bound a potion to  
 My bleeding heart, that sadly weakens its  
 Impulses as I drag my load along  
 And as a weary pilgrim, seemingly,  
 I climb the frozen path to summit of  
 The Everest to look beyond  
 On desolation.  
 And yet, I seek, as respite on the way,  
 The portals of my father's home to balm  
 The wounds I have received from one who pledged  
 His faith to me forever more.

*Helen*—Hope always, dear Augusta;  
 Each sun makes to the world another day  
 And as the night takes dismal refuge at

His coming down the dingy aisle of Time  
 Wrap up the scroll of sorrow past and let  
 Sweet Lethe take all its memories.

*Exit Helen.*

*Augusta*—A ray of light so pure and sweet  
 That makes the deepest darkness visible ;  
 The ruin of my life seems less a ruin in  
 Her company, as when the tallest pines  
 Are tipped with golden beams, relieves, in part,  
 The blackness of the shadowed vale below ;  
 O, destiny ! suage down this irony  
 Of fate and glint my hopes of life again.

*Exit.*

Act 3, Scene 2. Same.

*Enter Helen.*

*Helen*—Well,  
 That splendid woman has departed for  
 The peace of childhood's home,  
 And may she find a solace there  
 Sweet as the lyrics of old Lesbos,  
 But now I'll to my task of rescue  
 Circumspect and cautiously,  
 And so, discretion, backed by flinty nerves,  
 Must ever keep me dogged company ;  
 I did observe his cell had but loose boards  
 Across its level top for cover—

Near the prison lay a ladder  
 Light and long,  
 This I can secure and while the guard  
 Tramps round the measured beat, will lean against  
 His cell, this handy rounder,  
 Taking all the chances of discovery,  
 I'll make a rush to reach its shaky roof,  
 Here's my chisel and a hammer for  
 The cutting of the cuffs that manicle  
 His arm and foot to length of clanking chain.  
 This little jaunt may hazard much,  
 But, then, success without a hazard,  
 Surely should be salted down to keep  
 The skippers out of it.  
 The jeer and grin may bandy my attempt  
 And modesty flare out her jeweled hand,  
 But where devotion calls for action in  
 Defense of those we love unbidden will  
 Sets pride and sickly sentiment aside,  
 As when a storm breaks up the placid face  
 And hum-drum murmur of the sea.

*Exit.*

Act 3, Scene 3. Before the Prison.

*Enter Helen.*

*Helen*—Here's the ladder, opportune  
 Now for the scale

(Puts ladder against the prison wall; scales; guard approaches; moves boards, raises, lowers ladder inside, and descends.)

*Sidden* (talking in his sleep)—

So, inhuman jailer, you declare  
The game is up with me, and that I shall  
Not see her face again!  
My love, my life! Is there no refuge from  
This thralldom worse than death?  
Could I but see that face again and soothe  
The agony of her ruined life,  
Perhaps she would be comforted.

*Helen*—Dearest Will,

Your wish is gratified herein truth.  
I kneel before you. May we never part  
Again.

*Seddon*—What is this?

Hallucination! Am I going mad?

*Helen*—Not a bit of it, my dear.

I'm here as real as the stones you rest  
Upon, and come to set you free.  
Here's my chisel, hammer and a file.  
Hold out your hand, and I will cut the chain,  
And set your limbs at liberty.

*Seddon*—By what spell, our urging potency,  
Induced your coming here?

*Helen*—No spell but that of love;



No potency but love and will to dare.  
 But, then, there is no time for sentiment.  
 Hold down the chain upon this iron bolt,  
 And with this chisel and my hammer I  
 Will sever it.

(Strikes with the hammer, making much noise.)

*Seddon*—Hold, my dear!  
 This noise will start the guards, and pounce  
 They will upon you like a terrier  
 A kitten most defenseless.  
 If loosed, I could not go with you, because  
 A charge of breaking jail would lodge against  
 Us both. Besides, we could not possibly  
 Escape the country undetected.  
 Innocence cannot afford to break  
 A manacle. It is the guilty that  
 Attempts escape.

*Helen*—Ah, truly so!  
 I see my folly in this rash attempt,  
 And trust you will forgive it.

*Seddon*—Forgive is not the word,  
 But praise the longest day I live for nerve  
 That faced the undertaking.  
 Now get thee hence, my noble one, and if  
 You reach the outer world in safety,  
 Devoted memory will place you on  
 A pedestal enthroned forever as

A lover's talisman.

The clock strikes three, and now  
The eyelids of the morning lift apace;  
So let the balance of the waning night  
Full hood your face and eyes, which ever light  
The darkness of my present life.

*Exit Helen.*

Act 3, Scene 4. A Room in the Hotel.

*Enter Helen.*

*Helen*—In that bout I set my picket line  
So near the camping enemy  
That caution urged retreat.  
But still my midnight raid upon this den  
Was not a dismal failure, after all.  
I saw my cope, and he admired my  
Resolve and pertinacity.  
That is enough of glory for a month,  
And on it will I make an epic.  
For an everlasting memory.  
Where stand I now, and what the drift  
Of other work in that direction?  
Here's the Carson Appeal. Perhaps it has  
A place for me.  
Yes, good fortune brings it in  
The nick of time. (Reads:)  
Wanted—A first-class cook, competent

To take charge of the kitchen at the  
Warm Springs prison.

Apply to Abram Curry, on the grounds.

This will bring me near the one I love,

As does the intinct of a cooing dove

To mate that's caged most cruelly.

It gives, beside, an opportunity

To show my handiwork.

My mother—bless her loving soul!—

Did drill me in the art of keeping house

For many years.

Dishes did we conjure up that had

No name in decalogue of epicures,

And whet anew the keenest appetite.

Yes, I'll try the place!

In fact, I must do something, for my purse

Is but the shadow of a substance gone,

And scarce will pay my bill to date.

But then mishap hath given me acquaintance there,

Perhaps in measure quite embarrassing.

Contempt of angled eyes would look so high

With stretch of neck that doors would lose their caps

In passing that array of squinting wonder.

So dress I will, and paint and fix to make

A Bridget of myself.

But this great mass of golden hair is in

The way of biddy making.

O! thou great glory of my childhood,

And pride of larger womanhood!  
 I must then shear my ample treasure.  
 Necessity is law unto herself,  
 And sentimental qualms burn down to dross,  
 When destiny forefronts with rigid play.  
 The fates decree it, so here goes (cuts off her hair).  
 How stale and lank the little tokens of  
 A woman's love appear, when duty calls  
 For action through a bugle in her soul!  
 There! I think that make-believe will do.  
 My mother would disown me in this garb;  
 And rouge legitimate would blush to see  
 The dopes upon my face.

*Exit.*

Act 3, Scene 5. Prison Office.

*Enter Helen.*

*Helen*—Is Misthur Curry in?

*Curry*—That's my name.

What can I do for you?

*Helen*—Will, if you plaze, I come to say about the place advertised in the papers.

*Curry*—Do you mean the notice for a cook?

*Helen*—Sure, and that's for what I come.

*Curry*—Do you seek the place for yourself?

*Helen*—If it is agrayable, sur.

*Curry*—Do you think you can fill it?

*Helen*—I do indade, sur.

*Curry*—Were you ever in a state prison?

*Helen*—An' do you take me for a thafe, Misther Curry?

*Curry*—I do not mean that, but have you had any experience in prison life?

*Helen*—Faith, an' how cud I have any expariance in prison life unless I be a thafe, a house-breaker or a big-amist?

*Curry*—That's easy. I've been in prison many months, yet never committed a crime.

*Helen*—An angel, then, surely you are, Misther Curry, for the good book says there was niver a mother's son without sin.

*Curry*—Oh, well, I can assure you I am not a saint, but never have been convicted of wrongdoing.

*Helen*—That is quite common, sur; for the law's perversion makes many a thafe a church deacon who has a face for Sunday an' one for other days.

*Curry*—Then you think the laws are bad?

*Helen*—Never a bit, but the divil sames to preside over the jury box and judge so often that these poor fellas sometimes convict the wrong man, and let the thafe with a stovepipe go fray.

*Curry*—The lawyers are largely to blame for such miscarriage of justice.

*Helen*—Yis, but thin, sur, they are only human, an', like the big prachers, are allus called where the largest

fays and salaries are obtainable. The trouble is we all are made of different strakes of mud, intermingled with good and ill is such a way that charity should fill each soul with sympathy and mete out punishment to those who err with justice tempered largely with the tinder hand of mercy.

*Curry*—Well, we have not time to build new castles for the temple of philosophy. Let evolution do its work, and we our little part of it.

My wish is knowledge of your cookery.

*Helen*—My tongue is not a braggart bast to prate of what I know. I only wish you give me trial, sur, and if I cannot cook the round from little herring up to steaks of nine-horned elk, you may declare me cheat, unworthy of your further care.

*Curry*—What is your name?

*Helen*—Betty Maloney, sure.

My grandmither was second cousin to the thirty-third gination of Saint Patrick's footman.

*Curru*—Well, Miss Maloney, I am disposed to try you, and if found as pert in work as tongue I think our engagement wili be enduring. Come this way, and view the color of your opportunity.

*Exit.*

## Act 3, Scene 6. Kitchen of Prison.

*Enter Curry and Betty.**Curry*—Sing, this is Betty Malona.

She chief cook of the kitchen. Do whatever she tell you without question. This is Lena, Miss Maloney; the helper. I hope you will agree, and shall expect the meals on time.

*Exit Curry.*

*Betty* (inspecting the place)—Dirt, dirt, distressingly, and unadulterated with a single spot of common decency. What a task and what distemper had I in seeking it. But the die is cast, and die I will or do the job in measure credible. I'll burnish up these dingy walls with scrubbing brush, skins, flower cuts and evergreens, arranged in such a way as to make the place inhabitable. Sing, will you bring in some wood. Lena, these are awful dirty rags. Will you wash them, please.

*Sing* (aside to Lena)—Me no like wolm,  
 She too muchy dalm smart—run this  
 Way, then runny this way. Me too muchy  
 No sabby Ilishman.  
 Lena, so, so. She no good, I no mine  
 Her. She no like one Spanish senorita.

*Enter Mr. Mooney* (the steward, singing.)

Dear Erin, thy lasses are charming  
 As blithely they rake in the hay;

Laughing while aiding the farming,  
And blushing like roses of May.

Sweet Erin, the fairest and greenest,  
A gem on the lap of the sea,  
With wit of thy people the keenest,  
O Erin, I sing one to thee.

*Enter Sing* (with a load of wood.)

*Mooney*—Oh, oh! you blasted hathen,  
You've ruined me toes!  
Take that, an' that! (Striking Sing with a whip)  
And you that! (Striking Lena for laughing.)

*Enter Betty.*

*Betty*—Bar your whip, Mr. Mooney,  
The Chinaman is not to blame.  
'Twas your swagger that knocked the  
Wood on yer toes.

*Mooney*—To blazes wid yer, woman!  
Do yer mane to stand betwane me duty  
And meself?

*Betty*—An' is it yer duty to bate people?

*Mooney*—Yis, when they nade it.  
And thin a hathen Chinese is not people,  
For he has no soul and has a bast for a  
Mither, falls down to a wooden god  
An' ates rats for a livin'.



*Betty*—'Tis not for the like of yez to  
 Judge of papels souls, an' a hathen is  
 One that acts hathenish, and a hathen  
 Without brains could tell the hathen  
 In this rumpus.

*Mooney*—Betty Maloney, an' does yez  
 Take the part of a hathen fernist one  
 Of yer own race and color?

*Betty*—I take the part of right, as I  
 See it, whether it be in favor of a  
 Hathen Chinese or a hathen Irishman.

*Mooney*—Betty Maloney, yer tongue  
 Is sharper than an adder's tooth,  
 An' its pison makes me green in  
 Half a minute, so I'll bid the top of  
 The morning to yez.

*Exit Mooney.*

*Sing*—You belly good wolm,  
 Heap sabby. Him steward belly bad  
 Man. Chinaman too muchy dalm  
 Phule. No sabbv his mudder.  
 You telle what do. Me wolkey alle  
 Same as my bludder.

*Enter Dr. Duff.*

*Dr. Duff*—Here, Betty. I want some  
 Warm water and rags. This boy has  
 A broken arm, by the premature explosion  
 Of a quarry blast, and the fracture

I; sô bad that the member will  
Have to be amputated.

*Betty*—With careful setting and nursing  
Don't you think it might be saved, docther?

*Doctor*—Perhaps, but I have neither  
Time nor patience to fool away half a day  
In this case. Moreover, there is no one  
Here to give him the care and nursing  
Necessary.

*Betty*—Please, docther, place the child  
In condition for nursing and I will  
Do the rest.

*Doctor*—You know nothing of nursing  
Mangled arms. Moreover, your place  
Is in the kitchen to grub stake this  
Institution.

*Betty*—Sure, an' I know that, docther,  
But thin I have a little strake of humanity  
Left wid me yet. The lad's sintence  
Is for small offense, an' soon he'll be  
Free again. Then what can he do wid  
One hand for a livin'?

*Doctor*—Pshaw, woman! You are altogether  
Too tender hearted for a place like this.  
When I was surgeon in the war with  
Mexico I used to slash off arms and  
Legs with no more concern for the result

Than you have in depriving a spring  
Pullet of her bipeds. (Prepares for the cutting.)

*Betty*—Docther, have you a boy?

*Doctor*—Yes, about the age of this one.  
But what is that of your concern?

*Betty*—If this lad was yours, would  
You cut off his arm?

*Doctor*—No, certainly not, until every  
Other remedy had proved ineffectual.  
But this little renegade should not  
Be mentioned in the same breath with  
My boy. He is a fine, manly fellow,  
In every way worthy of his father, while  
This one is a felon, consequently should  
Receive but little consideration, for his  
Life is hardly worth preserving.

*Betty*—Docther, how does your boy's head  
Compare with this one?

*Doctor*—In every way superior. Round,  
Full, with every organ properly developed,  
While this fellow has more the head of  
An ape than a human. See its breadth  
Between the ears, denoting large acquisitiveness  
Conjoined with destructiveness, while  
His flat pate, low, receding forehead and  
Frontal narrowness indicate small intellect,  
With almost total absence of reverence

And moral perception.

*Betty*—Docther, is the boy to blame  
For his mental and physical make-up?

*Doctor*—Well, I can't say he is.  
The origin of some of his mental  
Deficiencies probably run back through  
The blood of generations, but then the  
Guiding hands and influence of home  
Should check and sway obedience  
In a youth like this.

*Betty*—But then, perhaps, he had no  
Home in truth nor mother's care to check  
The criminal predominate and guide him  
From the evil way.

*Doctor*—God help him, then, or drift  
He must to deeper depths of sin.

*Betty*—The Lord helps none that cannot  
Help themselves, so when a crater is warped  
And dwarfed by circumstances out of its  
Control, the only hope of betterment  
Must come from those who were from  
Circumstances better born and raised.  
Methinks Divinity did so intend,  
And all the prates of strutting consequence  
Will not relieve them from this duty  
In the sight of God.

*Doctor*—You talk severely, woman, of

People better than yourself! Curb  
 Your flying tongue and learn submissively  
 That place and wealth control all  
 Kingdoms of the world, make respectability  
 And mentor society without a skip in  
 Human destiny.

*Betty*—I know that many people hug  
 This shekel god, as does the Devil  
 Fondle with his ugly tail.  
 But Christ taught otherwise, and broke  
 His bread amog the lowly, where now  
 Are found his truest followers, who give  
 Of their mite to charity with loving hearts,  
 Which in the sight of God outweigh great  
 Gifts bestowed with ostentation.  
 The treasures of this world are surely  
 Found in little helps, that lift a brother  
 From the ruts of his discouragement,  
 And with a tender word point upward  
 For a greater consolation.  
 This boy does seem misfortune's child,  
 And shall we help him to a greater  
 One by cutting off his arm?  
 Does duty to humanity point that  
 Way? If your own boy had no other  
 Way of making a living but by his  
 Hands, would you sever them with  
 Heartless unconcern?

*Doctor*—Your words are worn and old,  
 Sweetened with the depths of kindly  
 Sentiment: they place the glowing coals  
 Among my memories, yet hold the  
 Balm in Gilead to the wounded and  
 Bid me choose between the stream of  
 Living water and the burning lake where  
 Conscience hath acquittance.  
 Pitiful are the painless; so I shall  
 Follow your suggestion and save  
 The boy's arm.

*Betty*—May the blessing of Saint Patrick  
 Fall upon you, docther, for this resolve!  
 Here's the wather and the rags. Set the limb  
 And I will do the rest.

*Exit Doctor and Boy.*

*Enter Warden Curry*

*Curry*—Betty, we have another bad  
 Case that needs your immediate  
 Attention.

*Betty*—An' what is it now, Mister  
 Curry?

*Curry*—It is o' a young convict,  
 Very low with typhoid fever, and  
 If not carefully nursed can not live  
 Three days.

*Betty*—Faith, an' I'm always ready!

To help a poor crater. Where will I find  
Him, Mister Curry?

*Curry*—In the new stone cell to  
The right, on the way to the quarry,  
Not yet roofed in.

*Betty* (in great agitation)—My God, is it  
He?

*Curry*—He? Who? What's the matter,  
Woman, are you ill?

*Betty* (sitting down)—Yes. Give me some  
Water, Lena.

Excuse me for this weakness, Mither  
Curry, for sure me heart is so  
Tinder for the distressed that I  
Fale all gone like whin I hear  
Of a new case.  
Where's the kav to the cell, Mither  
Curry?

*Curry*—Here it is—but remember  
I will hold you responsible should  
The prisoner escape while the key  
Is in your possession.

*Betty*—An' do you think a man  
Is trying to run away with a low faver?

*Curry*—But he may get better.

*Betty*—In the name of all the saints  
May it be so.

*Exit Curry.*

Yes, it is Will Sidden, my own,  
 Dying in that cold, damp cell where  
 I visited him that black, dismal night  
 Four weeks since.

O cruel fortune, hide me from  
 Myself and dull the pangs of memory  
 Capped with this last great sorrow.  
 When once the poise of simple life  
 Is loose and drifts the tide of  
 Fortune toward the Stygian Sea, how vain  
 Appears the struggle with environments  
 That hedge and blacken all the  
 Horizon of hope.

But those who love can never lag in  
 Duty to the living, though grief takes  
 Off the edge of every pleasure.  
 So melancholy shall not bind me  
 To his dismal car, for conscious duty  
 Well performed will strengthen ever faithful  
 Heart until the stars go down.

And when they fail there surely is  
 Reward for noble work beyond their setting.  
 Come, Lena; let us seek that adamant  
 Cell, where life does flicker as a lamp  
 Untrimmed and death is hanging up  
 His sable curtain.

*Exit Betty and Lena.*



*Enter Curry.*

*Curry*—Sing, where's the cook?

*Sing*—Gone to see one plissner,  
Velly sick.

*Curry*—Everything very nice now, Sing?

*Sing*—Heap sabbe, velly good  
Wolum, alle same as one angel.  
See, see, see. (*Sing shows Curry around.*)

*Curry*—Does she scold you?

*Sing*—Scole me? Alle same as one  
Kitten. She say Sing, wille you do  
This? Den she looke me, an' her eye  
Make one litning go alle way down to  
My toe. I no sabbe. She say, Sing,  
You go to hebben. I climb rite up  
To the top of house. She say, Sing,  
You go to de debble. I go hang myself.  
Me dunno. Me no sabbe wolum. She  
'Talk sweet an' smile. Me my bres' go thump-  
ta-thump alle same as one fool Melican  
Man. Me dunno. Me no sabbe.  
She no Ilish wolum—hep smart  
Vely good. Me dunno.

*Enter Betty and Lena.*

*Curry*—Well, Betty, how's the sick  
Man?

*Betty*—Bad indade, sur, an' will  
Surely die, the docther says, unless  
Removed from the din in which  
He is confined.

Have you not a better place to  
Give him, Misther Curry, plase?

*Curry*—I think of nothing for improvement.

*Betty*—Then may the good Lord help  
His soul, for he's surely lost.

*Curry*—Oh, yes; I have it.  
Pat Mooney's room is vacant since  
His discharge. The one with the  
Dormer window, second story, adjoining  
The chapel facing the court.  
You may have the patient taken up  
There.

*Betty*—May you live a thousand  
Years for this kind favor, Misther  
Curry; be as happy as the saints  
And have a friend for every leaf  
That rustles in the wind.  
Come, Lena.

*Exit Betty and Lena.*

*Curry*—By my soul, this woman is a  
Strange creature. In the garb of ignorance  
And drudgery, yet withal the kindest  
Heart I ever knew.

How near is all humanity together—  
 When the sordid selfishness, begotten  
 By the pride of place or circumstance  
 Is torn asunder through misfortune.  
 Assuredly there is divinity in man.  
 But those who worship place, or Mammon  
 As a god, perhaps engendered by their  
 Antecedents or the fear of want,  
 Have by degrees wound about themselves  
 A robe of selfishness so dense  
 That penetration is impossible  
 Short of great calamity.  
 While a simple child of nature  
 Like this girl, unwarped by hollow mockeries  
 Of pride, nor poisoned by the fangs  
 Of ostentation, carries heaven in her  
 Bosom daily, and as the sun that  
 Has no partiality, beams on the utmost  
 Of the world benignantly.  
 When will we learn humility and measure  
 The value of each soul by the good  
 That from it emanates?

*Exit.*

Act 3, Scene 7. Garden and Prison Grounds.

*Enter Betty, Lena and Dr. Duff.*

*Doctor*—A glorious morning, Miss Maloney,  
 The sun hath put a golden robe on all

The trees and every flower opens out  
 Its heart in adoration of the One  
 Who gave them life and stamina of kind  
 And flushed their many colors with a brush  
 Divinely charged.

*Betty*—Beautiful conception, yet my sense  
 Is blind, while anxious care encompass me  
 With wraps the deepest sable.  
 How seems the prisoner, enchained  
 By death's great envoy?

*Doctor*—Better, most decidedly.  
 The climax of the case has passed  
 And consciousness returning slowly, as  
 A wanderer from land of fantasies.  
 The baffled monster is now gathering up  
 The remnants of dominion lost for flight  
 To other fields and pastures new.

*Betty*—Sweet heaven!  
 How thy glory smiles upon the earth  
 And all the world seems beautiful to me,  
 As when a rainbow spans a somber cloud.  
 Come, Lena, to the chapel service, where  
 On this peaceful Sabbath we will praise  
 The Giver of all Good and prone the knee  
 In humble invocation.

*Exit Betty and Lena.*

*Doctor*—What a woman she does seem to me,

The living image of a servant, yet  
 A soul center of the beautiful  
 In thought and action.  
 How strange it is we know so little of  
 Ourselves and less of those about us!  
 The sweetest harps are strung by nature,  
 Ready to the hand of him who comprehends  
 He is a part and hath relationship to all  
 The universe and that each soul is from a  
 Common source and intermingle in another  
 World, with light and shade to fix their several  
 Antecedents, jeweled with their crowns of worth  
 Or ragged in their desolation of neglected  
 Opportunity in singing heaven's symphonies  
 And helping one another to better lives.

Act 3, Scene 8. Sidden's Sick Chamber.

(Singing in the distance.)

Pure are the sweet waters flowing  
 In the haven prepared for the blest,  
 Where the Lebanon cedars are growing  
 And the vines of the kingdom are dressed.

Fear not the dark shadows dividing  
 Time from eternity's home;

With faith and uprightness abiding,  
 Take courage, my brother, and come.

Farewell, God's glory is growing,  
 As soul from mortal does sever;  
 Farewell, Lethe's river on is flowing,  
 That bears us on forever.

*Enter Dr. Duff.*

*Doctor*—Will Sidden,  
 You have baffled Atrapos,  
 Winged the clutch of Eacus  
 And all distempers mortal.

*Enter Betty and Lena.*

And next to heaven you should truly thank  
 This walking wonder for relief.  
 Her name is Betty Maloney, chief cook,  
 Mellow sunlight in these prison walls.  
 And, withal, a wonderful woman in  
 Her way.

*Siddon*—Am I not indebted to you, doctor, for  
 The favorable turn my case has taken?

*Doctor*—To the value of a pin, perhaps;  
 But medicine at best is but an aid  
 Of small account compared to nursing such  
 As hers, when Circe sat with you on the edge  
 Of time.  
 For several days I strove unlaggingly  
 To keep you from the sleep of Endymion,  
 When like Medea came this wonder,  
 Wooing you to life again.

*Siddon*—Then heaven bless you evermore,  
 Good soul, and when of poise and strength again  
 I will reward your ministry as best  
 I can, and carry with me to the grave  
 Remembrance of the service rendered.  
 But soft. The doctor has a finger up  
 That bids me company with Hippocrates,  
 So peace be with you, let me reach again  
 That border land where late I wandered  
 Long, a silent river, darkened at  
 Its border; lashing not, her murmur like  
 The ocean; neither could I hear the current  
 Rippling, yet could feel its influence  
 As one does, sore and weary with  
 His pilgrimage, seeks a silent sail  
 Or ferryman to go he knows not where—  
 At last, fatigued beyond endurance longer,  
 I heard a voice across the mystic stream  
 singing:

Fear not dark shadows dividing  
 Time from eternity's home;  
 With faith and uprightness abiding,  
 Take courage, my brother, and come.

It seemed to me there could be  
 No mistake this time. Surely it was  
 The voice of my beautiful Helen on  
 The other side encouraging my coming.  
 So I boldly stepped off in the black

Flood, but the water was so cold and  
 The sensation so strange that my eyes  
 Were opened and I found myself here.

*Doctor*—Well, the moment you reached  
 That dark, cold stream and in imagination  
 Hear sweet music was that  
 In which the soul was trembling on  
 The brink of eternity.  
 Now the climax has passed, and with  
 A little care you will soon be  
 Yourself again.

*Exit Doctor, Betty and Lena.*

Act 3, Scene 9. Prison Kitchen.

*Enter Betty* (Sing and Lena in background.)

*Betty*—And so he recognized my voice  
 And thought me on the nether shore,  
 Inviting him to hither come.  
 If we were there in truth perhaps it  
 Would be consolation for us both.  
 For life seems but a troubled dream  
 At best, with here and there light  
 Glimpses of a hope beyond.  
 He's well again and now its bruited  
 About the wards that on the morrow  
 He will be compelled to take his  
 Place in line as quarry slave and



Bend to toil and stripes at will  
 Of some great ruffian.  
 So to-day will be the last I'll see  
 Of him perhaps for months.  
 What shall I do or whither go?  
 This agony of mind doth gnaw  
 The heart away and make a charnel  
 House of my existence.  
 High heaven, where is thy justice?  
 O hell, display assortment  
 Of thy miseries, that I may  
 Recognize wherein is woe and sorrow  
 Worse than this.  
 Here I in happiness comparable  
 Could drudge my life away, hedged  
 About with all its dark environments,  
 If this red blot of crimson upon his  
 Hands could wash itself away  
 In the crystal stream of truth  
 Not yet revealed.  
 But then this grief unbosomed to the stars  
 Is vain and futile of relief  
 For destiny seems sitting stolid in  
 His car of state, and with an iron  
 Finger bends and sways each human wish,  
 As does a wind the trembling willow boughs.  
 Yet, come what will, my thirst can never quench  
 In stagnant waters passed.

The present is the door ajar for work  
 And opportunity. To-morrow may  
 Not come to me, and so this half-flown day  
 Shall not brow on the border of the world  
 Until I stand revealed to William Sidden.  
 Wild may be this last resolve, but then  
 It seems the only hope that's left me.

Act 3, Scene 10. Dining Room, Officers at Dinner.

*Enter Betty with coffee pot.*

*Curry*—I have a bit of news, Betty,  
 That may concern you much.

*Betty*—What is it, Misther Curry?

*Curry*—Well, you will remember  
 That fellow Sidden whom you saved  
 From boxing and a funeral service.

*Betty*—Well, what of him?

*Curry*—He has been pardoned.

*Betty*—Pardoned! Pardoned, did you say?  
 (Spiling the coffee.)

*Curry*—Well, not exactly. The Governor  
 Has ordered Sidden's release, his innocence  
 Of the crime charged having been  
 Fully established.

*Betty*—Let me see the papers.

*Curry*—Here they are.

*Betty* (reading)—

Territory of Nevada—Executive Department.

To all whom these present come, greeting:

I, James W. Nye, Governor of Nevada Territory in the name and by the authority of the people of said Territory, do by these presents declare: That it having come to my knowledge through the dying confession of one Lo Lorenzo, coupled with ample corroborative testimony to establish the fact that said Lo Lorenzo was the actual murderer of Jerry Jessup, killed in Virginia City, April 29, 1859, for which crime William Sidden was apprehended, tried, convicted and sentenced to a term at hard labor, and is at this time serving out the sentence of the court.

Therefore, in consideration of the facts above stated, I hereby direct Abram Curry, Warden of the Territorial Prison under his charge, to immediately release from confinement and set at liberty the person of William Sidden.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and caused the great seal of said Territory to be affixed at Carson City this 24th day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and sixty-two.

JAMES W. NYE,

Governor of Nevada Territory.

Attest:

ORION CLEMENS,

Secretary of State.

Sweet Heaven!

This shaft of glory shatters all  
Our chains and arches space with  
Hanging rainbows.

Mr. Curry, may, may I take this  
Paper to the prisoner please?

*Curry*—Surely, if you wish, but  
Still my duty bids me follow you.

*Exit Betty, Curry and Officers.*

Act 3, Scene 11. Siddon's Room.

*Enter Betty and Officers.*

*Betty*—Oh, Will, you are pardoned! No, not pardoned, but set at liberty, because your innocence has been fully established.

*Siddon*—Are you really in earnest, Betty?

*Betty*—Certainly. Here's the papers. See for yourself. Dear Will, how happy I am to know you are free and not a blemish on your noble name.

*Siddon*—Well, Miss Malona, I am under obligations for your care and kind consideration, but——

*Betty* (hysterically laughing)—And Miss Malona, is it sure? (Running to a basin in the corner, washing off the paint, doffing gown and wig, shaking out her six-inch curls; turning to the astonished Siddon in a blaze of joy and beauty.)

How now, good soul?

Can coons and speckled leopards change their skins,  
Or painted woman have a soul within?

*Siddon*—Oh, apparition of the blest!  
Do I dream, or does reality  
Hedge the border of my visions with  
A form that hath not prototype in all  
The world?

*Helen*—No dream affects the mortal sight,  
But substance real—pith of womanhood.  
Your own devoted Helen sure, and once  
The apple of your eye.

*Siddon*—Yea, more; the consolation of my heart,  
And hope of all my future years.  
To-night I'll hang a lamp of mellow light  
Among the stars, and beg sweet Venus guard  
It there forevermore as talisman  
For every one who dares to love and die,  
If need be, in defense of it.

*Curry*—This ends the roll of your adventure,  
Leaving the prison desolate and cookless.  
Here are the wages for the term you've  
Served, and grateful memory from  
Every soul within these walls that hold  
The obduracy of the state.  
And, Siddon, here's your couterments,  
Gleaned when you entered here.  
Among the lot I find you have

Just fifty shares of Ophir stock.  
 Each share is worth five hundred dollars.  
 Sell it soon, for Comstock kings  
 Who lord it in this land, can make  
 Or break the market in a day,  
 And turn to tramps the common herd  
 Of buckers at the royal tiger.

*Exit Curry and Officers.*

*Siddon*—How sudden is this change!  
 It staggers sense to recognize my  
 Own identity, and like a top my head  
 Runs round upon my shoulders.  
 What shall we do, my love, and whither go?

*Helen*—If two are twain, and pledged troth,  
 With hearts that beat as one, with fortune  
 At the door and home awaiting them,  
 What would you in a like affair propose?

*Siddon*—Marriage. Surely nothing else  
 Can fill the aching void in such lives.  
 So, come. The parson's ministry we'll seek;  
 Then cash my stock, and speed away to old  
 Kentucky for a honeymoon.

*Exit.*

Act 4, Scene 1. Judge Dane's Home.

*Enter Judge Dane, Wife and Augusta.*

*Judge Dane*—Augusta, your sojourn here

Has been three months, and I have oft observed  
Your indisposition to mention home or  
Husband. What is the matter over  
The mountains?

*Augusta*—Much matter, father. I have  
Neither home nor husband any longer.

*Judge Dane*—What meanest thou by  
Such a speech as that?

*Augusta*—Mr. Winton, jealous of a shadow  
Finding lodgment in the ricket of  
The nerves to such extent that hoodoos hatched  
Full-fledged in his disordered mind,  
Did crawl between us like so many  
Skeletons enwrapped in mummy cloth,  
And there they lay so near his little heart,  
With whispering of things that happened not,  
Until the serpent green had mirked  
His manly vision in a way that lost  
The anchorage of balanced sanity.  
Then, with a rasping speech, most low and foul,  
He plied the dregs of ribaldry until  
The compass of my destiny did run  
Its needle round the digit stretch, and yet  
Oscillates without a resting place.

*Judge Dane*—Tut, woman! Turn  
Your tongue to better counsel with  
Yourself, and dragnet all these

Flashy minnows from your speech.  
 Patience hath no monument on which  
 To sit in this affair, so bottle up  
 Your umbrage, cork it down with common sense,  
 And, with contrition, set about your pack  
 Of things you wish returning home.

*Augusta*—I have not semblance of  
 A home, if forced beyond your threshold;  
 For home is where the best affections are,  
 And linked with golden chain to those we love.  
 I am content to be your kitchen drudge,  
 Run the needle, spin the glossy flax,  
 Scrub, or lather d'irty linen, but  
 To be made slave and jibe at one fell swoop  
 Seems pitiless in he who thus ordains.  
 Your will to me has ever been as law,  
 And more I have, as satellite about  
 Its central hold.  
 I pray you not dispel affinity,  
 For the aberration of a soul  
 That loses hope is lost indeed.  
 So, as a child to this brink, dutiful,  
 I do beseech you give me leave to plead,  
 And with indulgence hear my tale of woe.

*Judge Dane*—No, Augusta. As defendant in  
 This suit now rest your case.  
 The judgment of the court is that  
 You do forthwith return to threshold of



Your husband, sue for peace, and make  
 It possible by gentle will and breadth  
 Of condescension ever manifest.

*Mrs. Dane*—Augusta is within the pale  
 Of woman's right, and I do dare to  
 Succor her.

Your words are cold and caustic to  
 The ear, and oft I've felt their  
 Grinding force from heart to fingers' ends,  
 Yet curbed my temper for a patched-up  
 Peace, but is a woman but a whiff  
 Of ribbons blown about by every wind,  
 Who dares not say her soul's her own?  
 And that she has a modicum of pride  
 And conscience deeper than the wraps  
 About her form?

Now, if the child cannot a wife to  
 Winton be, let the tide of her great  
 Sorrow ebb and flow about her early home.  
 This checkered life is bad enough at best,  
 Then why gad and wound a grief  
 When consolation heals the rankest sore?  
 'Tis true that this affair may lose us  
 Pride, but pride hath never far to fall  
 'That wrings a heart for blood to sate  
 Its own distemper in.

*Judge Dane*—How now? Such pique  
 Is new to me! An angel turned to

Wormwood in its age, with darting  
 Tongue that stirs the marrow in my  
 Bones, and flurries up my wonted dignity!  
 'Tis enough! I've said that back she must  
 To husband go. So prepare for transit  
 On the morrow.

*Exit all.*

Act 4, Scene 2. A Street in San Francisco.

*Enter Happy Jack (singing).*

Her eyes are like the stars of evening,  
 Set in the azure of the deep,  
 Where angels hover while receiving  
 Prayer to God from those who weep.

Her form is lovely, art-consuming,  
 Chiseled Greek and Venus pose,  
 With health in all her features beaming,  
 Mingled lily with the rose.

Her footprint shames a Cinderella;  
 Breathes she sweetness full and warm.  
 Without a gist of bright prunella,  
 Lives she faultless as a charm.

*Enter Berring.*

*Berring*—Hello, Jack, you sawing boards again?  
 Such harmony will set the street astir  
 With grinning teeth, and stop the mellow lay  
 Of puddle frogs to hear a brother sing.

When wits are out a fellow soon may lose  
 A jaw with hollow stuff like that.  
 You surely come on other business here.  
 What have you learned of fair Augusta,  
 And her future plans?

*Happy Jack*—My work has been propitious, for  
 I caught the housemaid on the hip with mock  
 Of dainty compliment, and making of  
 Myself her shadow, when she wished  
 Unstinted service, so to such extent  
 Did I get in her simple graces that  
 The very knot-holes in the Judge's house  
 Have given up their secrets freely as  
 A blabber in the market-place.

*Berring*—Well, let the jingo go. Give me the facts.

*Happy Jack*—Augusta, gloomy, silent as the halls  
 Of ruined castle, moves about as does  
 A phantom nursing its own misery.  
 Thus weeks have passed with her like train  
 Of tramping mourners with a bier!  
 But yesterday there came a change,  
 As when the toiling sea does long contrive  
 To keep an equipoise, a storm brews on  
 Its face, and all its depths do tremble on  
 The brink of desolation.

*Berring*—Cut off the woolly length of this  
 Fantastic tale, and let me have the pith

And marrow of your mouthing.

*Happy Jack*—The pith of it is this :  
 The Judge, like some great walking-beam,  
 Unused to let or hindrance, got down  
 To business in Augusta's case.  
 With look and mien, foster brother to  
 A thunderbolt, goared down into her heart  
 To find the cause why she had lingered there,  
 So long unmindful of her marriage vow.  
 When told the reason, and the ruin wrought  
 Within her home by green-eyed jealousy,  
 And hence the flight to seek her mother's arms—  
 The master with a bluster like the wind  
 When cornered in a wheezing calliope,  
 Bid his daughter pack her scanty srip  
 And be prepared to board the ferry in  
 The morning, for the sapphire city.  
 Thence to Sacramento, on the way  
 To home in bleak Nevada.

*Berring*—Where stop they in this haste?

*Happy Jack*—It is not eked with certainty,  
 Yet dignity and love of trapping show  
 Swell dinner, Dane and daughter at the Lick.  
 But be thou wary, Berring, people talk,  
 And calumny doth scent you in the breeze.

*Berring*—Ah, people talk, I know it well,  
 And hell doth blaze with its effrontery.

The tongue of slander murks the work of God  
 And gives an appetite for garbage rotten ;  
 For envy is a monster bred so foul  
 And nurtured in the lap of littleness,  
 That innuendo is the end it feeds upon,  
 And washes virtue with its slimy brush,  
 Bathed in a cup of gall.  
 Its serpent fang strikes in the sweetest flesh  
 And drips its rankness covertly upon  
 The heart of purity, that with its help  
 The venom of the damned may poison all  
 The beauty of the world.

*Happy Jack*—Aye, sir ;  
 You strike home with your burning words  
 And coin a medal worthy of the ghouls  
 You neck it on !

*Exit Happy Jack* (singing) :  
 All is well that's ending well,  
 And virtue has its innings ;  
 The Devil has a world to sell,  
 Obtained by small beginnings.

*Berring*—However compromising this affair  
 May seem, I have no thought of ill ;  
 It surely is commendable to choose  
 A noble woman as a friend, else what  
 Is friendship but a mockery?  
 To see a creature wronged that more deserves

A favor, does in compassion worry me.  
 Not an inch beyond decorum have  
 I gone ; and since suspicion's foulest breath  
 Hath caused her casting off, shall I stand here  
 Like a mummy petrified with fear  
 And see the life crushed out of her?  
 No, not if all the devils in the land  
 Shall hack at me.  
 At least I'll see her ere she goes, and give  
 A word of council in this trying hour.  
 Perhaps I can suggest solution that  
 Will turn the tables in this game of chance.

*Exit.*

Act 4, Scene 3. Hotel Parlor.

*Enter Judge Dane and Augusta.*

*Judge Dane*—Here, Augusta, is your  
 Ticket. The boat leaves Washington-street wharf  
 For Sacramento at four o'clock.  
 A hack will be at the hotel door at  
 Three-thirty to take you and baggage  
 Down.  
 Now, all things having been arranged  
 For your departure, and since the last  
 Boat crossing the bay leaves at three  
 O'clock, giving me only half an hour  
 To reach it, I must now bid you

Good-bye.  
 May God bless and restore you  
 To your home and husband.

*Exit Judge Dane.*

*Augusta*—In the desolation of this hour  
 Do I dream, or has reality  
 Burnt out the hope of happiness to come?  
 An outcast and a ruined wife without  
 A fault of mine.  
 'Tis true that little molehills of the mind  
 Oft grow to mountains, when the balance of  
 A faith is lost through jealousy or warp  
 Unnatural by process least  
 Expected, and realization comes of such  
 Calamities, we then review the past  
 And see wherein there was a scanty chance  
 Of betterment if taken on the slips.  
 But now it is too late to remedy  
 The past or weep for that which might have been.  
 So I will smother breathings of this sort  
 And take resignedly the tenor of  
 My seeming destiny, and always hope  
 The favor of stern Atropos.

*Enter Berring.*

*Berring*—I beg indulgence for  
 This rude intrusion on your privacy,  
 But hearing of your soon departure for  
 Nevada, and wishing for a word before

You go, I venture thus presumptuously.

*Augusta*—This bash of yours surprises me  
Amazingly, and breaks decorum in  
The teeth of time.

*Berring*—I do concede the manner of  
My coming is a lag in etiquette,  
But ill can hardly have lodgment where  
Ill is least intended.  
Friend should surely counsel with a friend,  
When clouds obscure the dusky horizon  
And agony of soul seeks solace in  
A friendly word.

*Augusta*—Your speech is surely sensible,  
And since I stand upon the dangerous  
Border of uncertainty, with pits  
On every hand that bode me sorrow, I  
Can hardly wish your presence gone,  
Though primed propriety hardly sanctions it—  
What have you of advice to offer me?

*Berring*—I thank you for this opportunity,  
And shall no bing of alum offer you,  
But rather balm of time to heal the wound  
That heartless usage hath imposed.  
We will not haggle over what has passed,  
A sore that's often probed will never heal;  
The best is but to scab it over with  
Forgetfulness, and assuage the fever on



Its border with the oil that flows from faith  
 In God, with thoughts of duty uppermost.  
 While beauty of a woman, coupled with  
 The sweetest worth and chastity are held  
 In high esteem by all the good and true,  
 Yet there is often heaped upon her head  
 By gibbering ghouls a thousand importunities.  
 And in this amplitude of worth rests your  
 Offense, as owls hawk at the sun.  
 A soul misjudged by yellow circumstance  
 That flies its foul environments should not  
 Recruit its ruin by returning.

*Augusta*—Then in this perturbed and sore  
 Dilemma, do you counsel me to go  
 Not over to Nevada?

*Berring*—As I would a gentle sister, thrawled  
 And hedged about with villainies.

*Augusta*—Then whither shall I go?

*Berring*—To Europe.

*Augusta*—Impossible! I've neither friends  
 Nor money for a trip like that.

*Berring*—I will furnish funds to round the trip  
 And more; I have some trusted friends who go  
 By steamer on the morrow for the East,  
 Thence directly to the Continent.

*Augusta*—How can I brave a father's will?

*Berring*—A father's will is sacred to  
 A loving child, but for a woman grown  
 And lashed to raft that with a swing starts out  
 To sea, thonged there by her father's will,  
 Hath she not in truth a human right  
 To break her bonds and make escape?

*Augusta*—Perhaps. But then I cannot obligate  
 Myself to you in way compromising  
 For every big and little fish that bobbed  
 About the straining boat would surely have  
 A serpent's tongue to venom all the voyage.

*Berring*—Perhaps, but then I simply make the loan  
 Of money necessary for the trip,  
 To be returned at any time that suits  
 Your least embarrassment, and be assured  
 That not a digit of your smallest hair  
 Shall owe me obligation.

*Augusta*—My child. What will become  
 Of her?

*Berring*—She is now safe within your mother's fold,  
 Which means a charge that wavers not an inch  
 In duty to her blood.  
 Will you go? I see you hesitate.  
 And surely reasonable you should  
 For prudence hangs upon your skirts and begs  
 An interview, while justification  
 Stands before, with scale unsteady in  
 The doubtful balance, yet the die is cast

Not by your wish, but destiny is black  
On any other road you turn.

*Augusta*—Your plea seems in a measure sensible  
And most seductive, but the greatness of  
The power wealth does give you places me  
On short allowance of respect should you  
But waver in fidelity of promise.

*Berring*—Ah, madam, much of money often is  
A danger great. It represents a man  
Or woman standing on the apex of  
A monument, with one foot in the air  
And sawing arms to keep its equipoise.  
The only greatness comprehensible  
To God is truth, which dwells forever in  
His works and to each mortal manifest.  
My word stands sacred in this case.

*Augusta*—Your proposal staggers me in sweep  
And leaves me naught but words to lean upon,  
With quicksands at my feet in which I bog  
Distressingly.  
When I would answer yes, there's tugging at  
My conscienie, forcing up a troubled no;  
Memory revisits me and speaks  
Of friends and relatives most deeply grieved  
At thought of hazzard so uncommon.  
While doubt in agony sits gloomy on  
Its pedestal, with face tear-stained and eyes

All red with their weeping.

*Berring*—Accept the proffer, then,  
And all the ill that comes of it shall be  
My shadow while I live, and here and now  
Will bond my soul and all possessions on  
The earth that  
All I say and all I give or do  
Shall be as free from taint or selfish end  
As welling water from the crystal springs  
In paradise.

*Augusta*—Then I accept the proffered aid,  
And here's my hand to bind my faith  
In all you've said.

*Berring*—'Tis well, and good will come of it  
If right is might in God's ordaining.  
To-morrow I will call again to check  
Your baggage at the wharf and see  
You fairly off.

*Exit all.*

Act 4, Scene 4. San Francisco Dock.

(Passengers going aboard, parting of friends, ringing of bell.)

*Steamer Mate*—"All aboard for Panama."

*Enter Augusta and friends, Sidden and wife.*

"Down with the gangway,  
Let go the stern line."

*Mrs. Sidden* (leaning on her husband's arm)

Will, there sits a lady by the mast

I have most surely seen before.

She seems in great distress, with eyeballs red

And look that does betoken misery.

May I, in sympathy, a word with her?

*Sidden*—Pshaw, my dear, the world is full of grief,

And how can you assuage it with a word

Or lullaby poured in a stranger's ear?

A kitten with a tender foot would smile

At your persistency in helping it.

*Mrs. Sidden*—Suppose you had a well

That ran above its curb a flow of water,

Wasting for lack of use, would you

Deny a sip or two of it to some

Poor thirsty soul?

*Sidden*—Not if I know myself.

*Mrs. Sidden*—Then why deny me like relief?

Even little naiads, singing in

The wooded streams, delight in charming those

Who come to drink with them.

*Sidden*—Ah, well; who can argue with a charm

Or bar confines to loving sentiment?

Therefore I follow where you choose to lead.

*Mrs. Sidden* (approaching Augusta)—

Pardon this intrusion,

For your face suggests to memory

That I before have met you somewhere in  
The world.

*Augusta*—Perhaps. All things seem possible  
To one who's reached beyond its common sphere  
Into the realm of impossibles.

*Mrs. Sidden*—If I mistake not your identity,  
We met in Carson City several months  
Ago, and lodged together in a room  
In that old log-built hostelry.

*Augusta*—Yes, I do remember now,  
Your name is Helen Jessup.

*Mrs. Sidden*—That was my name, but now it is  
Mrs. Sidden; here's my better half.

*Augusta*—And changed you are  
As does the dark and gloom of night  
Into a rapture of delight,  
That only morning can unfold  
With beaming sun and glints of gold.

*Mrs. Sidden*—A shining compliment surely,  
But then, when shadows lift and all the clouds  
Are gone, why should the sun refuse to shine  
Again? How fare you now, Augusta?

*Augusta*—As a rose that's withered, leaning on  
A darkened wall, with scanty warmth of sun  
Or hope of betterment.

*Exit Sidden.*

*Mrs. Sidden*—How glorious seems the closing day,  
 With streaming light upon the level of  
 The sea, sentineled by the fairy cloud  
 In silver raiment near the horizon  
 To ring the curtain down, when leaves the stage  
 The burning eye of Ormuzed.

*Augusta*—Conception worthy of thyself, bright one,  
 The light and glory of the world to thee  
 Is emanation from your loving heart  
 Without a shadow darker than a star.  
 To me the blazing orb of day is but  
 Distill of blood, absorbed from battlefields  
 Of all the world, while standing still to view  
 The carnage, and the rolling deep sings  
 Requiems to hetacombs of dead  
 Despoiled of life by her, that swing and rock  
 Forever in their coral cradles.  
 Heaven is a phantom ship that sails  
 On summer seas, unlogged or baffled by  
 Contrary winds,  
 While hell is hope delayed and conscience  
 Gnawing at the seat of memory.  
 But then the past has sealed her casket full  
 Of good and ill, and all the world of art  
 Can not unlock it for recovery  
 Of a single minute squandered  
 At the sacrifice of duty.

*Enter Doctor and many others.*

*Doctor*—Ladies, we have another genuine Case of Asiatic cholera on board. It appears in the person of the lovely Little wife of Mr. Summerville, whose Body was consigned to the deep only a few Hours since. Is there a lady present Who will volunteer attendance When spasm and delirium seize The patient?

*Augusta*—Doctor, I am at your service. Please lead the way.

*Mrs. Sneider* (*Augusta's friend, aside*)—Dare you, Augusta, expose yourself To this contagion? Surely you will catch it and give it To the rest of us. Pray leave the doctor With his patient. What is she to you? A stranger pure and simple. If she dies Unaided, what of that? Her husband's Gone, and so she need not care to live.

*Augusta*—She is a woman and needs A woman's care. Is human nature so Ungainly in the sight of God that all This crowd of strut and primping beauties Shake and blanch with fear when sore Calamity does seek of them a helping hand?



If you were sick with like complaint  
 And left to die among the captain's crew,  
 What sort of blessing would you carry  
 To your grave for all this fair array  
 Of starch and paint and little souls?

*Mrs. Sneider*—Oh, that would be a  
 Case unlike this one, for I have  
 Friends and relatives on board who  
 Would not let me die alone, but  
 This sick woman neither has.

*Augusta*—So much her greater need  
 Of stranger friends.  
 Blood that's claret should be  
 Thickened with a little human sympathy  
 Or some such potent agency to manufacture  
 Souls for them that would not  
 Shame a Hottentot.  
 It hath been truly said that man's  
 Inhumanity to man makes countless  
 Millions mourn. Man's inhumanity  
 To woman is still more distressing;  
 But the climax is capped by woman's  
 Inhumanity to woman.

*Exit all.*

Act 4, Scene 5. Sick Room.

*Enter Augusta.*

*Augusta*—How are you, my dear?

*Mrs. Summerville*—Decidedly bad,  
There seems to be no chance for me.

*Augusta*—Hope and persevere. (To attendant.)  
Bring me broken ice  
And tell the doctor send me ten grains  
Of calomel rolled in a pill. Quick!

*Mrs. Summerville*—O let me die!  
My husband calls beyond the river  
At my feet.

*Augusta*—Did your husband love you?

*Mrs. Summerville*—Yes, of course he did.

*Augusta*—Did you love him?

*Mrs. Summerville*—Certainly.

*Augusta*—Were you not jealous of him?

*Mrs. Summerville*—Why, no indeed.

*Augusta*—And he had perfect confidence  
in you?

*Mrs. Summerville*—Most assuredly he did.

*Augusta*—Are you quite sure he did not  
Love some other one better than yourself?

*Mrs. Summerville*—Lord, woman!  
How you talk. (Standing up.) What  
Strange questions you do ask!  
Who put such notions in your head?  
Where did you learn anything  
About myself and husband?  
Where did you come from, anyhow?

Who are you? And what induced  
Your coming here to wait on me?

*Augusta*—Sit down, my dear, and  
I will tell you.

I came as nurse because you are  
A woman and need a woman's  
Assistance in your sickness.

My name is Augusta Winton, from  
San Francisco, and on my way to Europe.  
You are better now.

One more sip of this tonic, a little  
More ice and you will be well.  
There, that will do.

*Exit.*

(Rolling the patient from the room in a chair.)

Act 4, Scene 6. A Street in Paris.

*Enter French Dancing Girl* (sings):

The lovely Jemmy Flinkers,  
With glasses on his blinkers,  
I met him with the drinkers  
On the banks of Salonell.  
Salonell, Salonell,  
On the banks of Salonell. (Dances.)

He said he was in love with me,  
So would a loving husband be,  
And dress me downward to the knee,  
Upon the banks of Salonell.

Salonell, Salonell,  
Upon the banks of Salonell.

(Dances off the stage.)

*Enter Augusta and friends.*

*Augusta*—I wonder why  
I have not later news from home?  
Full three months I've lingered here  
For purpose indefinable,  
With even Mr. Berring seemingly  
Indifferent in the matter of  
My lodgment.

*Mrs. Sneider*—Here he comes this moment.

*Enter Berring.*

*Berring*—I greet you all most lovingly.  
And here's for you, Augusta,  
A certificate from the County Clerk  
Of Alameda County, California,  
Setting forth the cause of action and  
The court's decree annulling marriage  
Vow of yourself to one Nelson W. Winton.

(Augusta reads the certificate copy.)

Now, Augusta, since there is  
No longer legal bar between us,  
May I not hope you'll give your little hand  
And heart in it to me in marriage?

*Augusta*—I respect you highly, but  
I doubt propriety of union such  
As you propose, for I am not in love

To such extent as justifies a step  
 So full of weal or woe.  
 Time at least should be allowed  
 For council ere it be too late.

*Berring*—Be it as you wish, Augusta, but  
 In this way you hang a shadow in  
 The horizon of hope, that harbingers ill  
 To me and floors the ladder I had topped  
 On coming here.

*Augusta*—You said on parting ere  
 I journeyed hence that freedom in all things  
 Should be to me unstinted as the sun,  
 And that the money loaned to me should be returned  
 At most convenient season.

*Berring*—True indeed, and truth  
 Shall follow it to the last farthing.  
 But then, as does a foolish boy  
 Who undertakes to smoke a rabbit from  
 The hay, I've fanned this little flame of mine  
 Into a ruddy glow that threatens such  
 A bonfire in my heart that water can  
 Not quench, so if you mean to give me  
 Moonshine for your solid self, perhaps  
 It would be best to so declare before  
 The ruin gets beyond control.

*Augusta*—Not so bad as that, I hope.  
 It would be sad to start a pyre in  
 And run to dross so much of manhood.  
 In fact, I feel the binding force and strength

Of obligations great, and of all men  
I think the most of you, but—

*Berring*—Forbear, Augusta. Not another word,  
But let me warp the woof you've put into  
The loom, and there will grow a web from threads  
Of gossamer, more fair than fabric on  
The shoulders of a Syrian queen.  
It is expected by your friends and mine  
That I shall bring you back in truth a wife,  
To go without you gives to evil tongues  
A morsel rolled delightfully into  
A scandal jeweled off with ribaldry.  
And how can I defend myself and you?  
I'd have to put another face upon  
Full half the mugs of that community  
And leave inheritance of woe to you.

*Augusta*—I see you take this matter seriously,  
And since you are the only manly hope  
Which I have left, here is my hand and all  
"I have of heart with it.

*Berring*—Thy sweet words  
Are mincemeat to the jaw of hunger,  
Flavored with the oil of Rhodium.  
Come, now, with friends  
For unction of the ceremony;  
Then to the bridal chamber, leaving them  
Behind.

*Exit all—End.*



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